

# Current History

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# Current History

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# Current History

DECEMBER, 1970

VOL. 59, NO. 352

*Is the Second Indochina War drawing to a close? What are the prospects for early United States disengagement in Southeast Asia? Seven articles evaluate the situation in that region today, analyzing the specific problems facing the nations there. Our introductory article points out that ". . . to the extent that the past two decades of United States policy have enabled the nations of Southeast Asia to progress to the point where they now seriously consider cooperation among themselves, those United States policies have met with considerable success."*

## United States Policies in Southeast Asia

BY BERNARD K. GORDON

*Southeast Asia Project Chairman, Research Analysis Corporation*

**A**S WE ENTER the decade of the 1970's, United States relations toward Indochina and Southeast Asia can be viewed from two perspectives. The first perspective is general, the second is narrower and more specific. In the general perspective, it is important to focus on where we have been during the past two decades, where we are today, and how we got there.

A specific perspective, in contrast, focuses on the most immediate events and developments in particular countries and situations, and is more concerned with the policy-maker's need to ask, "where do we go from here?" This article will deal first with the broader, or general, perspective of the United States position in Southeast Asia.\*

There is a striking contrast between the East Asia of 1970 and that of the early post-war years, from 1945 to 1950. In 1970, the distinguishing characteristic of the United States relationship to Southeast Asia is the pace and timing of its disengagement from that region. The years 1945-1950, in contrast, marked the beginnings of deep United States involvement in Southeast Asia, and it is essential that we remember the political climate of the region during those years.

In the period 1945-1950, with nothing but destruction and instability in Asia, there seemed little choice for United States policymakers—especially in the months after the close of the Pacific War in September, 1945—except to remain in the forward positions which United States forces had won. East Asia was an area of great weakness, in a global era in which only the United States was genuinely powerful. In Asia particularly,

\* The views expressed here are those of the author alone, and do not necessarily reflect opinions of the Research Analysis Corporation or any of its private or public sponsors.

United States forces represented the dominant and, in some cases, the only effective authority. Thus American officials became more and more deeply involved in unfamiliar and complex situations which had their roots in the Pacific war, and it is hardly surprising that, in the absence of any significant competing or countervailing influences, decisions by Americans had a sharp impact on East Asia. It will not be argued here that all, or even most, of the decisions in those first post-war years were correct, or fair, although undoubtedly they appeared so at the time to policy-makers. But it is very likely that most of the decisions whose consequences we must live with today were hardly seen as matters of choice; most of them were probably adopted because there seemed no other reasonable course available.

In French Indochina, for example, the record of United States involvement was hardly attuned to questions of Vietnamese nationalism, about which almost nothing was known. It was instead a record of step-by-step intrication, based more on the need to react than on a conscious plan. The first decisions concerned the fact that the territories of Indochina had been French and that France was the wartime ally of the United States. After the war—and especially after 1948–1949 when Soviet intentions in Europe seemed to become clear—basic United States policy was to help the French and other European (and later NATO) allies regain their political, economic and military strength and stability.

In practice, of course, this meant that the United States steadily and increasingly subsidized French colonial policies in Indochina every year after 1946, and especially in the critical years of the Indochina War: 1952, 1953, and 1954. By 1954, when French forces suffered their humiliating and morale-crushing defeat at Dienbienphu, the United States had become the guarantor and financial angel of the war against Ho Chi Minh and Vietnamese nationalism.

Matters were settled differently in the Netherlands East Indies, where United States policy ultimately supported the Indonesian

nationalists. The Dutch, despite their ejection by the Japanese, sought to return to Indonesia in 1945. With force and subterfuge (and perhaps some idealism), they hoped to return the Indies to its 200-year-old status as Holland's prize colony. But in the face of determined and armed opposition by the Indonesians—whose struggle was endorsed by the United States and most members of the United Nations—this was a vain attempt. With the endorsement of the "world community" (and with the United States most actively involved), Indonesia finally achieved genuine independence in 1949—but this was hardly the beginning of a period of stability. Instead, the year 1949 merely symbolized the onset of a new struggle—perhaps just now coming to an end after 20 years—in which Indonesia's political and economic distinction was her turbulence and chaos.

Those were the years in which Indonesia first tried party-style democracy. But in the absence of greater development and socio-cultural cohesion, that effort proved to be a disaster in an island nation of 100 million terribly poor people spread over a distance of 3,000 miles. In reaction, after the first decade Indonesia turned once more to President Sukarno, but the handing over of greater power to Sukarno resulted ultimately in an even more severe economic decline and, finally, in a brief armed conflict with Malaysia. Sukarno was ousted only after an attempted coup d'état, in which elements of the Indonesian Communist party sought to take power in the state, and it is only since 1967–1968 that a modicum of political and economic stability has come to Indonesia.

### SOUTHEAST ASIA TODAY

These developments, while not typical of all Southeast Asia, were important characteristics of the region during the first postwar years. They are mentioned here because the instability that was widespread during the 1950's and 1960's stands in considerable contrast to the relative promise and record of achievement that can be found in large parts of Southeast Asia today. Much of that progress could not reasonably have been predicted

even a half-dozen years ago, and certainly not at the beginning of the 1960's. To return once more to Indonesia, one of the striking features of the past two years has been the accelerating pace of private foreign investment interest there—it is almost not an exaggeration to suggest that Japanese, European and American businessmen get in one another's way in their anxiety to develop the rich natural resources of Sumatra and the Celebes.

In Singapore, which 10 years ago seemed to be in a constant state of political and economic turmoil and labor unrest—in ways that suggested the likelihood of an early Communist takeover—there has been startling economic growth and political continuity. Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew's desire to make Singapore the "New York of Southeast Asia" is increasingly a reality. Already the city-state of two million Chinese—now marked by a healthy business and political climate—is the hub of activity for the multi-national corporations engaged in business in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. Moreover, although banking, warehousing, insurance and transshipment facilities remain at the core of Singapore's prominence, they are no longer the only economic activities in which the city excels. Instead, Singapore is increasingly an industrial center; progress has been so rapid that Prime Minister Lee's government can now afford the luxury of picking and choosing among those foreign firms that are anxious to build factories and assembly plants in Singapore's "industrial estates."

Only five years ago, in contrast, Singapore's leaders (and observers elsewhere) feared that Singapore might not be able to withstand the planned closing of Great Britain's huge military base just as, before that, many believed that Indonesia's desire to cut her historic dependence on Singapore's processing and commercial facilities would surely sound the death knell for Singapore's economic development hopes. All have been proven wrong, and today leaders throughout Asia and the

developing world journey to Singapore to study her public housing achievements, her education and training programs, and her ability to maintain a standard of living in Asia second only to Japan's.

In neighboring Malaysia, it is easy to forget how recently independence was achieved, and that in Malaya (now "West Malaysia") the early and middle 1950's were characterized by an intense and important guerrilla war. In a conflict in which their major instrument was terror, Malayan Chinese Communists sought to prevent the peaceful transition, under British auspices, of the territory of Malaya to independence. With the help of Australian and other Commonwealth forces, their effort was defeated by British, Malay, and anti-Communist Malayan Chinese, but the "Emergency" (as the guerrilla war was labeled) was the primary feature of Malayan affairs from 1948 to 1953. Finally, in 1957, Malaya achieved formal independence, and in 1963, the British colonies on the huge island of Borneo—Sarawak and North Borneo—were incorporated as independent states within the Federation of Malaysia.<sup>1</sup>

In a political system so recently independent, in which the population is almost evenly divided between Malays and Chinese, placidity and political stability would hardly be expected. Yet through much of the 1960's, parliamentary institutions and practices began to take root in Malaysia. The most evident blemishes in this record have been several racial riots and disturbances, and a very serious outbreak took place during several days in mid-1969, following elections. Yet even those riots, in which hundreds of people were murdered in Kuala Lumpur, did not spread to other areas of the country, and in the volatile racial climate that characterizes Malaysia, that has to be regarded as an important positive factor.

None of this should be regarded as an argument for complacency, and anyone who has lived or spent any reasonable amount of time in Malaysia knows how close the racial and cultural tensions between Malaysia's Chinese and Malay population are to the

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed studies of Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia, see the articles that follow.

surface. At the same time, the nation's leaders and the political system have demonstrated an impressive capacity to cope with these tensions.

An even more impressive degree of political maturity can be recognized in Thailand—a nation often subjected to unknowing, unreasonable and unfair criticism in the United States. While the ruling group in Thailand is still dominated by soldiers, the nation has come a long way from the 1950's, when political repression was common, criticism of the government was not tolerated, and coups d'état and rumors of new coup attempts were the dominant characteristics of politics. During the 1960's, Thailand achieved an impressive record of economic growth—even aside from United States assistance and expenditures related to the war in Vietnam—and political participation and stability have developed in a very encouraging way. Parliament is meeting and provides a forum for open criticism of the government, although it is not an altogether free institution, and the nation's military leaders are not sure they like it.

Recently, in the wake of the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk in Cambodia in March, 1970, the Thai government of Field Marshal (and Prime Minister) Thanom Kittikachorn provided a significant illustration of its increasingly tolerant and mature political posture. The new Cambodian leadership under General Lon Nol asked for Thai help—even Thai troops—in its effort to rid Cambodia of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese forces, and many of Thailand's military leaders clearly believed that Thailand should meet this request. But many civilians in the Thai government, especially in the Foreign Ministry, were opposed. The civilians carried the day.

But perhaps most remarkable of all was the fact that there was a campus debate on the issue between its two leading protagonists—Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman, and Chief of the Army Staff General Prapas (who is also Interior Minister and is sometimes referred to as the "strongman" of Thailand.) These developments, particularly ex-

posure to public scrutiny of the pre-decision ingredients of an important foreign policy issue, would have represented a most unlikely, and probably impossible, event in the Thai environment of the 1950's.

### THE DEVELOPING ASIAN SYSTEM

In opposing the use of Thai troops in Cambodia, a main argument raised by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman rested on the principles of the "Jakarta Conference." Held under the auspices of President Suharto of Indonesia and his Foreign Minister, Adam Malik, the conference of Asia nations that convened in Jakarta during May, 1970, is likely to be regarded as a landmark in the development of postwar international politics in East Asia. In terms of participants alone, it was a remarkable development. Within the space of a few weeks Indonesia organized what was essentially an all-Asian Foreign Ministers meeting, for the clear and announced purpose of considering the security of one of Asia's smallest nations, Cambodia.

To be sure, the Communist nations of North Korea, North Vietnam, and China did not attend. But it is rather the roster of those who did attend that demands attention, and especially worth mentioning was the participation of Japan, represented by her Foreign Minister. This was the first time since the days of World War II that a Japanese Foreign Minister had met with most of the other Asian nations for the announced purpose of discussing a security problem. For 25 years, Japan sought consciously and conscientiously to avoid such a situation, and thus made the "low posture" famous.

But Japan's participation in the Jakarta Conference, which was attended also by Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of Australia, New Zealand, the northeast Asian countries of Taiwan and Korea, and almost all the Southeast Asian nations, formally signals the beginning of the end of that "low posture." It symbolizes what observers have already recognized: that the decade of the 1970's is likely to witness Japan's increasingly frank concern with the politics and the security of Southeast Asia.

This is not of course to suggest that the Asian nations are, or soon will be, prepared to shoulder the security burdens of their region. Far from it. It does, however, suggest the first fruits of a generation of American policy in East Asia. Much of that policy has been aimed at "buying time" in anticipation of the day when the states of Asia themselves, including Japan, would feel sufficiently self-confident ultimately to discuss and, if necessary, to act together in the interests of their common security. The Jakarta Conference was a first step in that direction. It was not sponsored nor attended by the United States, and it represented something of a bittersweet pill for Washington, since it called for the removal of all foreign troops from Cambodia.

There is another aspect of the conference, taken particularly into account by Thailand's Foreign Minister in his public and private debates, that must also be mentioned. One of Thanat Khoman's arguments against sending Thai troops into Cambodia was his insistence that to do so would not only contravene the overall conference communiqué against foreign troops, but would be particularly inconsistent with the foreign policy goals and aims of Indonesia's Foreign Minister Adam Malik. The relationship between the foreign ministries in Bangkok and Jakarta is a most significant factor in recent international politics in Southeast Asia, and is particularly relevant to the goals and aims of the United States in Southeast Asia during the 1970's.

There has been a growth, most apparent since the mid-1960's, of a genuinely indigenous form of Southeast Asian regional cooperation. In the early years of the United States involvement in the region, the United States sought to foster such cooperation; the establishment of SEATO in 1954 is the most prominent reminder of that period. But the Asian political climate in the 1950's and much of the next decade was not ripe for home-grown Asian regionalism, however much it might be in the long-term interests of the United States and the Asian nations themselves.

Instead, it seems to have been necessary for the post-independence leaderships first to try their hand at flamboyant nationalism, or the idealism of nonalignment, or reliance on an outside great power in the search for security. More recently, however, with the first flush of independence no longer a novelty, Southeast Asian nations that previously had little to do with one another have recognized increasingly their need for joint action. A.S.E.A.N., the five-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations formed in 1967, best illustrates this, and A.S.E.A.N. is increasingly regarded as the core element in the foreign policies of several Southeast Asian nations.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the relationship between Thailand and Indonesia, two nations whose foreign policies have been in stark contrast. Thailand, the SEATO member and close military partner of the United States, and Indonesia, only a few years ago the very model of a nonaligned nation, have begun to work out an extraordinary common understanding of the direction in which Southeast Asian states must go if they hope to retain their identity and independence. For both leaderships, regional cooperation has become the first-priority goal in their Asian foreign policy, and this too must be counted as a deeply favorable development from the viewpoint of the United States. For Indonesia and Thailand are the most influential of the non-Communist Southeast Asian states, and it is very likely that directions in which they jointly embark will be followed by others as well.

The national interest of the United States would be clearly consistent with the growth

*(Continued on page 369)*

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*"Since 1964, there have been two separate wars in Laos. . . the war in northern Laos . . . [and] . . . the war along the Ho Chi Minh Trail." Because of the vicissitudes of the war in Indochina in 1970, "the possibility has been created of some sort of partial disengagement by both sides in northern Laos."*

## Laos in the Second Indochina War

BY ARTHUR J. DOMMEN  
*Los Angeles Times Bureau Chief, Saigon*

**T**HERE HAS NEVER BEEN any doubt in the minds of the leaders of North Vietnam that the war in Vietnam is really about Indochina. The late Bernard Fall was describing the war in South Vietnam as the second Indochina War in his writings as early as the early 1960's, and the sudden adoption of this name by news media in the wake of the spread of actual fighting into Cambodia after the ouster of Prince Norodom Sihanouk on March 18, 1970, represented a semantic change rather than a change of realities.

In Laos, the second Indochina War began almost on the very day the first one ended. Almost before the ink was dry on the 1954 Geneva Agreements, the propaganda organs of Hanoi, Peking and Moscow accused the United States of committing aggression in Laos under cover of the SEATO Treaty in order to replace the departing French. With the exception of relatively brief periods from November, 1957, to May, 1959, and again from July 24, 1962, to April, 1963, there has been continuous fighting in Laos between factions supported on the one hand by the Communist bloc and on the other by the United States. Attempts to arrive at a workable coalition government have had only the most marginal effects in damping down this fighting, which by 1970 had resulted in the displacement of an estimated 700,000 persons, or roughly one-fourth of the entire population of the country.

The United States was thus involved from an early date in Laos in providing aid to the Royal Government. This aid was justified on the basis that it was offered in response to requests from that government, as allowed, after 1962, under Article 6 of the Protocol to the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos:

The introduction into Laos of armaments, munitions and war material generally, except such quantities of conventional armaments as the Royal Government of Laos may consider necessary for the national defense of Laos, is prohibited.

Because of specific prohibitions in the protocol, the United States faced a continuing dilemma about whether or not to disclose its actions in Laos and, if so, how much to disclose. Thus while President John F. Kennedy was still in office, a branch of the U.S.-A.I.D. mission in Laos, staffed by retired military personnel in civilian clothes, was established under the name of the "Requirements Office" to handle military supplies. In the face of continued North Vietnamese activities in Laos in violation of the protocol, President Lyndon Johnson's administration announced in May and June, 1964, that United States reconnaissance planes were flying over Laos. These planes were being escorted by armed planes authorized to strike at antiaircraft batteries on the ground which were manned by Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese troops, some 6,000 of whom had remained in Laos in contravention of the pro-

vision of complete withdrawal of foreign military forces. The unusually large size of the military attaché's office at the United States Embassy in Vientiane was also publicly announced.

Much else remained officially undisclosed, although it was generally known to press correspondents and was sometimes written about. Because of these official strictures, the new phase of the second Indochina War in Laos became known as "the secret war." Finally, in what amounted to a major policy departure, on March 6, 1970, President Richard Nixon made a statement placing on the record for the first time much information about United States activities in Laos. He revealed that the United States was providing military assistance to regular and irregular forces in Laos in the form of equipment, training and logistics, and that United States planes were interdicting the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos and flying combat support missions for government forces. On March 10, the United States military command in Saigon began reporting aircraft losses over Laos, thereby ending a blackout that had been maintained by the United States Defense Department for almost six years, during which time about 400 planes had been lost.

The President's action took a great deal of courage, and in part the decision was the result of growing pressures in the United States press and in Congress for official disclosure of how deeply the United States was involved on the Laotian battle front at a time when the decision had been taken and was being implemented to reduce the level of United States troops in South Vietnam. In part, however, the decision to make public the United States involvement in Laos appeared to stem from an evaluation of the role of the Soviet Union in Laos and in the Indochina War fundamentally different from the evaluation which had been entertained by the previous administration.

#### **POLICY OF SILENCE**

The basic policy of the Johnson administration in Laos had been to avoid a ground commitment there. This orientation of United

States policy in Laos was compatible with the Soviet leadership's primary concern, which was to contain Peking's influence over the Indochinese Communist movements. Military actions taken by the United States under the "national defense" clause in support of the coalition government could not very well be officially acknowledged by the United States if they violated other prohibitions of the Geneva Protocol, which they did. Since the United States did not acknowledge its actions, the Soviet Union was able to make a show of solidarity with Hanoi and the Pathet Lao by quoting their reports on United States violations, without ever bringing into question the continued validity of the Geneva Protocol. In effect, the Soviet Union turned a blind eye on United States actions.

It thus came about that the United States Embassy asked correspondents in Vientiane to use "discretion" in filing dispatches about United States actions. Pointing to the position of the Russians, Ambassador William Sullivan said, "It's one of the few areas of agreement we have with them." Sullivan enjoyed a close personal relationship with the Soviet Ambassador in Laos, Boris Kirnossovsky, and he felt that any reporting in the American press that might produce pressures for official pronouncements was detrimental to United States interests.

The most that can be said about this policy or, rather, this conspiracy of silence, was that it may have helped to prevent an armed Soviet-American confrontation over Laos, if that had ever been likely. At most, Soviet cooperation never went beyond restraint from negative action, and on March 15, 1970, Premier Aleksei Kosygin once again turned down a United States proposal that, as Co-chairman of the Geneva Conference, the Soviet Union should arrange consultations among the signatories to deal with a new round of heavy fighting in northern Laos. An odd situation arose after President Nixon's March 6, 1970, statement: the only visible Soviet reaction to the placing on the record of United States violations of the Geneva Protocol was increased Soviet pressure for negotiations among the Lao factions.

The price the United States was forced to pay for its former policy of official silence was a heavy one, however, and it is likely that the Soviets deliberately set out to benefit by it in the one place that counted for them—in Hanoi. The North Vietnamese leaders, whose only guide for handling the Americans was the experience they had had with the French, were acutely sensitive to the fact that the American domestic scene was a vital battlefield of the war. Unless the American public could be made to lose heart in the enterprise in which the United States was engaged in Indochina, there was little prospect that the Vietnamese Communists would ever attain their objectives. And the best way the American public could be made to lose heart for the effort was to lead Americans to believe that they were being lied to by their own government. It was here that the Soviets, with an understanding of American social structures and the mechanics of government far superior to that of the North Vietnamese, had useful advice for their allies, at little risk to themselves.

This fact was borne in upon me when I went to interview the Soviet ambassador, Viktor Minin, in Vientiane in July, 1970. The first thing the ambassador said after greeting me was that he had noted that my newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times*, had come out editorially for American withdrawal from Vietnam for the first time a few days previously. The editorial overlooked the question of how this withdrawal might be effected, and thus contributed little new to the current American discussion of this issue, but it had been picked up by the wire services and carried around the world. Thereafter, my questions about Soviet policy in Laos, I found, were received by Minin in an atmosphere of artificial tension.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Senate, *United States Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad; Kingdom of Laos*. Hearings before the Subcommittee on United States Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-First Congress, First Session.

<sup>2</sup> *The New York Times*, September 18, 1969, quoted in *Congressional Record*, vol. 115, no. 150.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Senate, *op. cit.*, p. 435.

## THE NIXON POLICY

The Nixon administration showed a greater awareness of real Soviet motives than its predecessor. Relations between the new United States ambassador in Vientiane, G. McMurtrie Godley, and Minin were slightly more distant. The policy of official silence about United States activities in Laos, except for reasons of security, was ended. A subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was given hitherto classified information in hearings held during October, 1969. The transcript of the hearings was published, albeit with many deletions, on April 17, 1970.<sup>1</sup>

The atmosphere surrounding the publication of the transcript was highly charged. Some of the subcommittee members complained that they had never before been given information about such matters as American bombing, American forward air controllers, and American military attachés, even when they themselves had visited Laos.

A new school of breathless journalism had made its entry on the Laos scene. Such dispatches as the one that began:

Vientiane, Laos, September 17—In a series of secret military operations in the last three weeks, American-backed troops have seized two strategic areas of Laos long held by pro-Communist forces.<sup>2</sup>

fostered the impression of new commitments by failing to mention that the forces fighting the pro-Communists had been receiving United States aid for more than a decade. The writers of such dispatches, repelled by the war, saw an opportunity to exploit the administration's credibility gap; their reports were frankly intended to serve polemical rather than factual ends.

A sorry lack of precision and logic added to the confusion in Washington and in the American press. Senate subcommittee counsel Roland Paul, examining Ambassador Sullivan, quoted Assistant Secretary of State William P. Bundy as having said "that the United States would 'put our own forces' in Laos if Communist forces got the upper hand there,"<sup>3</sup> whereas Bundy had actually

said that if the *North Vietnamese* invaded Laos "the only response we would have would be to put our own forces in there." The two eventualities were, of course, considerably different and, moreover, the differences were appreciated in Hanoi.

As the subcommittee chairman, Senator Stuart Symington (D., Mo.), observed, "Speculative news stories, Communist propaganda, irresponsible political charges, are poor substitutes for reliable information on a subject of such importance."<sup>4</sup>

Aside from being remarkable for what it tells about the state of mind in the United States, the record of the hearings is particularly noteworthy for what it discloses about the essentially limited nature of the United States commitment to the Lao government. As Ambassador Sullivan testified,

I can say that President Johnson, from the instructions he gave me when I went to Laos, made it quite clear I was to undertake no commitments, and the U.S. Government would not undertake any commitments with respect to Laos.<sup>5</sup>

### CRISIS IN CAMBODIA

Two days after President Nixon's statement on Laos, a series of events began in Indochina that were to exert a lasting influence on the war and on American involvement. On March 8, villagers in the Cambodian province of Svay Rieng demonstrated against the Vietcong; on March 11, the North Vietnamese and Vietcong embassies in Cambodia were sacked; on March 18, the Cambodian Chief of State, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, was deposed by unanimous vote of the Cambodian Parliament. Shortly afterwards, the trade and payments agreement between Cambodia and the Vietcong government, under which the latter purchased supplies and held transit rights through Cambodia, was suspended by decision of the new Phnompenh government. It is well to examine in what ways these dramatic events affected (1) the operations of the North Vietnamese army in Laos; (2) the Pathet Lao movement led by Laotian Prince Souphanouvong; and (3) the Royal Laotian

Government of Premier Prince Souvanna Phouma in Vientiane.

With their supply route by sea and air through Cambodia suddenly closed off, the North Vietnamese needed to make absolutely sure of the security of the Ho Chi Minh Trail through Laos and to increase its carrying capacity. This was perceived immediately by the Lao, whose predictions of further Communist gains in southern Laos soon came true. On April 30, Communist forces seized the town of Attopeu in southeastern Laos, which had been in Royal Government hands continuously since the July 24, 1962, cease-fire.

On the bank of the Se Kong River, Attopeu guarded the passage of the river downstream to its junction with the Mekong in the Cambodian province of Stung Treng. Hitherto, the North Vietnamese had built their supply lines around the town; supplies from North Vietnam had been moved southward to a point above the town and then eastward into South Vietnam, and supplies from Cambodia had been moved up the Se Kong and then overland into South Vietnam, passing south of Attopeu on the famed Sihanouk Trail. Now the flow of supplies was suddenly redirected; the North Vietnamese wanted to make use of the river for floating rafts and tin drums downstream on the rain-swelled river. Attopeu was like a cork: once it was pulled, supplies could be floated from the vicinity of the A Shau Valley all the way into Cambodia. After driving out the government garrison, the first act of the North Vietnamese in Attopeu was to requisition about 100 civilian boats.

Tight North Vietnamese control was soon clamped on the Cambodian provinces of Stung Treng and Ratanakiri. On June 9, the Lao provincial capital of Saravane, where pressure had been growing, fell to the Communists. Radio Hanoi and Radio Pathet Lao claimed that the action—a violation of the 1962 cease-fire line—had been taken to foil American plans for introducing South Vietnamese and Thai troops into the region.

In the following weeks, the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao expanded their areas of

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 366.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Senate, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

activity throughout much of southern Laos as they geared their new supply systems to feed their men in Cambodia and South Vietnam. Certain of these routes crossed the Mekong River north of Khong Island and then wound their way southward on the right bank of the Mekong to a new North Vietnamese supply center at Rovieng. It was against supply routes such as these that President Nixon announced on June 30 that "air interdiction missions" would continue after the withdrawal of United States ground forces from Cambodia.

#### A "SUMMIT CONFERENCE"

On April 24-25, Prince Souphanouvong (chairman of the Central Committee of the Neo Lao Hak Sat [N.L.H.S., political arm of the Pathet Lao] and Deputy Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of National Union established in 1962) and Khamsouk Keola (Chairman of the Committee of the Alliance of Lao Patriotic Neutralist Forces and Minister of Public Health in the Provisional Government of National Union) attended what was described by Communist sources as the Summit Conference of Indo-chinese Peoples, held in southern China.<sup>6</sup> At this conference they met North Vietnam's Premier Pham Van Dong, South Vietnam's Nguyen Huu Tho, and Cambodia's Sihanouk. All together, they represented the implementation of the Indochinese "united front" policy announced by Le Duan, First Secretary of the Lao Dong party (the Vietnamese Communist Party) at the Lenin centennial observances in Moscow on April 21.

The final declaration of the summit conference stated:

Proceeding from the principle that the liberation and the defense of each country are the business of its people, the various parties pledge to do all they can to give one another reciprocal support

<sup>6</sup> Khamsouk Keola had left Laos in the latter half of 1963 on an official mission. He then journeyed to the Soviet Union, China and Cambodia, without the permission of his government, and returned to Khang Khay instead of to Vientiane in late 1964. A similar path was chosen by a small number of Cambodian notables after March 18, 1970.

<sup>7</sup> Radio Hanoi in English, April 27, 1970.

according to the desire of the party concerned and on the basis of mutual respect.<sup>7</sup>

There was no mention of a military alliance, undoubtedly in deference to the prohibitions contained in the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Agreements and to the policy of neutrality professed by Sihanouk.

Souphanouvong must have been of two minds about the formation of the "united front." As leader of the Pathet Lao movement since 1950, he had been intimately associated with the Vietnamese Communists but, if one believes his own statements, he did not intend to turn over control of Laos to the Vietnamese. He had reportedly left Vientiane reluctantly in April, 1963, following the assassination of Foreign Minister Quinim Pholsena. The fighting on the Plain of Jars in May, 1964, and the escalation of the North Vietnamese intervention in Laos had been, on the whole, unfavorable developments from the point of view of the Pathet Lao, who were forced by these events into greater dependence upon their Vietnamese allies.

#### SOUPHANOUVONG'S POSITION

The war in northern Laos between the troops of the rightist and loyalist neutralist factions backed by United States air power, on the one hand, and the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese, on the other, produced a dual effect on the dashing, mustached 58-year-old Prince. In one sense, it trapped him into participation in a conflict over which he had no control (and therefore one that tended to make him a puppet of the Vietnamese). In another sense, as long as he physically survived the war with its dangers and hardships, and continued to demonstrate that he was the leader of the Lao resistance, it added to his personal stature, and thus his security. He was the leader of a faction to whom a future political role in Laos had to be conceded by the Vietnamese Communists, although they might not find him altogether willing to pay them a handsome price for their sacrifices on what to them was a secondary front in the war. At all events, Souphanouvong remained a man to be contended with; his position was enviable when com-

pared to that of Sihanouk, who was a political exile at the mercy of Peking and Hanoi.

Souphanouvong's speeches at the summit conference contained no hint of new commitments either to the Vietnamese or to Sihanouk. In the N.L.H.S. Central Committee's annual memorandum on the anniversary of the signature of the 1962 Geneva Protocol there was only a single reference to the summit conference, and that in the last paragraph.<sup>8</sup> Forsaking the highly polemical tone of similar memoranda in previous years, the 1970 document emphasized the prospects for an early resumption of negotiations among the Lao factions.

#### A NEW FIVE-POINT PROPOSAL

By the time the memorandum was published, preliminary moves for negotiations were already well under way. The groundwork had been laid on March 6, the very day President Nixon issued his statement on Laos, when the N.L.H.S. Central Committee published a statement "On the Subject of a Political Solution to the Lao Problem." The statement was in five sections, including (1) a statement of support for the principles of the sovereignty, independence, neutrality, unity and territorial integrity of Laos coupled with a demand that "the United States must put an end to its intervention and aggression in Laos"; (2) a reaffirmation of the Geneva prohibitions against military alliances, foreign military bases and foreign troops and support for a foreign policy of "peace and neutrality"; (3) a proposal "to respect the throne, to hold free and democratic general elections, to elect a National Assembly and to set up a democratic government of national union truly representative of the Lao people of all nationalities (minorities), to build a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos"; (4) a proposal for the holding of "a consultative political conference composed of representatives of all Lao parties concerned in order to deal with all the affairs of Laos" in the period between the restora-

tion of peace and the holding of elections, within an agreed security zone, and the establishment of a provisional coalition government; and (5) proposals for the unification of Laos "through consultations between the Lao parties on the principle of equality and national concord."<sup>9</sup>

Two observations may be made about this five-point proposal. First, it is similar in form and part of its substance to the 10-point "global solution" advanced by the South Vietnam National Liberation Front at the Paris talks on May 8, 1969. Second, it drops the 1962 tripartite framework for a Lao coalition, in accordance with the position adopted by the N.L.H.S. (with support from Hanoi and Peking) that the original Government of National Union was upset by the abortive rightist coup d'état in Vientiane on April 19, 1964, and the split in the neutralist faction engineered by the N.L.H.S.

On March 9, Souphanouvong sent a telegram from his headquarters in Sam Neua to Souvanna Phouma in Vientiane disclosing that he was sending a messenger to Vientiane. The messenger delivered two letters on March 22, one addressed to Souvanna Phouma and the other to King Savang Vathana. In his letter to Souvanna Phouma, the Pathet Lao leader asked for an "immediate, complete and unconditional" halt to the United States bombing of Laos to create propitious conditions for negotiations. In his reply on April 9, Souvanna Phouma agreed to discuss the five-point proposal without mentioning specifically a bombing halt, although he countered with a proposal for a cease-fire (to include a bombing halt) as a step to create favorable conditions for the opening of negotiations.

By this time, however, the dramatic events in Cambodia were running full speed ahead, and they exerted their influence on the positions of both Vientiane and Sam Neua.

#### THE GENERALS' DREAMING

Among the generals in Vientiane, the overthrow of Sihanouk, followed by the swift entry of United States and South Vietnamese troops into Cambodia, produced a state of

<sup>8</sup> Pathet Lao News Agency, July 21, 1970.

<sup>9</sup> Pathet Lao News Agency, March 7, 1970.

mind that was akin to dreaming. If the fiction of neutrality had been done away with in Cambodia, why not do away with it in Laos? If United States troops went in to destroy North Vietnamese sanctuaries, would there not be all the more reason to believe they would go in to destroy the trail network in Laos that fed those sanctuaries? These were the thoughts that passed through the Laotian generals' minds. The Cambodian operation was precisely the kind of surgical stroke that had been proposed in staff conferences for the past five years, as the frustration of efforts to squeeze off the flow of supplies southward had increased.

The generals were joined by others in this sort of dreaming. The South Vietnamese ambassador in Vientiane, who had heard the talk from Saigon of a new anti-Communist "Saigon-Pnompenh-Bangkok-Vientiane axis" traveled the cocktail party circuit talking up the likelihood of a coup against Premier Souvanna Phouma. On the other hand, North Vietnamese diplomats also went around to the diplomats of uncommitted countries anxiously inquiring whether "the Americans planned to overthrow Souvanna Phouma as they had done Sihanouk." It was almost as if Hanoi were trying to force the situation to a head so that it could withdraw its embassy from Vientiane as it had withdrawn its embassy from Pnompenh; then it could set it up again—who knows?—in Sam Neua accredited to a government that would be a puppet government of Hanoi, representing "the Laotian patriots."

It was a difficult moment for Souvanna Phouma, who postponed his departure from Laos for his annual "cure" in France. Particularly after the fall of Attopeu and Saravane, pressures mounted in the National Assembly to free the Royal Government from the strictures imposed by the Geneva Protocol. Some Assembly members urged open war against North Vietnam, which had so clearly become the aggressor in all of Indochina. Finally, in a series of confidence votes in the Assembly, Souvanna Phouma managed to squeak by. He was supported and assisted by his Finance Minister, Sisouk na Champs-

sak, whom he appointed delegate for the Defense portfolio, and was helped by quiet but effective lobbying on the part of the Indian and Soviet ambassadors in Vientiane. More important perhaps, the United States made it clear to the Lao generals that in the event of a coup attempt on their part, United States aid would be cut off.

The Cambodian events interrupted the exchange of views between the government and the Pathet Lao, and for a time there were fears in Vientiane that Souphanouvong had indeed been roped into a circus in which Peking and Hanoi were the masters. It was recalled that Peking had not given its blessing to the five-point proposal. However, on June 12, a further message was received from Souphanouvong in which he apparently modified the bombing-halt demand by leaving the way open for a partial bombing halt. Coming on the heels of the shock of the loss of Saravane to the Communists, the message was interpreted in Vientiane as meaning that the North Vietnamese were slicing the salami very thin. On July 31, Prince Souk Vongsak, Secretary of State for Public Works and Transport in the 1962 National Union Government, arrived in Vientiane from Sam Neua to carry on the exchanges. It was the first time since 1963 that an N.L.H.S. member of the Cabinet had been in residence in Vientiane.

Since 1964, there have been two separate wars in Laos. One is the war in northern Laos, which by the summer of 1970 was tying down two full North Vietnamese divisions—the 312th and the 316th—under threat of a counteroffensive by Meo troops led by Major General Vang Pao. The second is the war along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Under the Nixon administration's Vietnamization policy, the desirability of United

*(Continued on page 364)*

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*"Cambodia's sudden entrance onto the world scene in March and April, 1970, was an event that neither Cambodia nor the world was ready for, since they had hidden from each other for so long behind mutual indifference, misinformation and clichés."*

## Changing Cambodia

BY DAVID P. CHANDLER

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**O**N MARCH 18, 1970, both houses of the Cambodian Parliament voted unanimously in open session to remove Prince Norodom Sihanouk from his position as Chief of State. The Prince had dominated Cambodia's public life for almost 30 years, and the Parliament's move shocked many observers, although it is possible to find the roots of the upheaval in the events of the 1940's. Since 1966, in any case, destructive pressures had been building up between Sihanouk, on the one hand, and the Parliament, the intellectual and commercial elite, and the army officer corps, on the other. The progress of the war in Vietnam and its effect on Cambodia were also important factors.

It is important to realize that Sihanouk entered public life as a puppet of the French in October, 1941, just before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Plucked unexpectedly from a French *lycée* in Saigon following the death of his mother's father, King Sisowath Monivong, Sihanouk was crowned King of Cambodia a week before his nineteenth birthday. He received his crown from the Governor-General of French Indochina, and for the next three years he lived under the close, daily supervision of the French. In March, 1945, Japanese military forces occupying the area jailed French authorities throughout Indochina and set up an independent kingdom of Cambodia, with Sihanouk as King. Real power fell to a rabidly

anti-French intellectual, Son Ngoc Thanh, who occupied the posts of Foreign Minister and Premier until the French returned in September and sent him into exile in France. Sihanouk's fondness for the French and his fear of Thanh led him to take a cautious line regarding independence, although he signed an agreement with the French which granted Cambodia some of the trappings of freedom, including French permission to write a new constitution.

In the meantime, a handful of Cambodian students who had spent the war years in France, witnessing her defeat and exposed to republican ideas, returned to Cambodia. There they joined Thanh's followers, who were scattered through the lower ranks of the bureaucracy and, to a lesser extent, among the Buddhist clergy, to found the Democratic party. This group urged immediate independence from France, and won a majority of the seats in the consultative assembly convened in 1946 to draft a constitution. This document was released in 1947, and is still in effect. Modeled largely on the constitution of the fourth French Republic, it places considerable power in the hands of a popularly elected National Assembly—a body which the Democrats controlled after the elections of 1948—and limits the political authority of the King. Between 1947 and 1952, the French granted insignificant concessions to Cambodia, negotiating with Sihanouk

and his advisers. The Assembly, deprived of real political power by the continuing French presence in Cambodia, blamed Sihanouk for collaborating with the colonial power. In 1951, Thanh was brought back from France at Sihanouk's request, probably in a move to strengthen his negotiating position and to neutralize Democratic opposition. Thanh, however, soon disappeared and took up armed resistance against the French.

Sihanouk was shocked by the extent of Thanh's lingering popularity. At the same time, his reading of the weakening French military situation and of his own political future pushed him in 1952-1953 into a more active role in the search for independence.<sup>1</sup> After several months of blaming the Assembly and the Democrats for obstructing his efforts, Sihanouk dissolved the Assembly and set off on what was later called his crusade for independence, culminating in an agreement with France in November, 1953.<sup>2</sup>

From the late 1940's until independence, Sihanouk had viewed the National Assembly as a political threat. He feared Son Ngoc Thanh and was impatient with constitutional procedures. These animosities may have derived from a guilty conscience about his own failure to take up arms against the French. From the Assembly's point of view, the Prince's dalliance with France had betrayed Cambodian nationalism, while his manipulation of the Assembly overstepped his constitutional powers.

## ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN THE 1960'S

Cambodia's political, economic and finan-

<sup>1</sup> See Robert Shaplen, *The Lost Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 371-372, and Martin Herz, *A Short History of Cambodia* (New York: Praeger, 1956), pp. 84-86.

<sup>2</sup> Cambodia thus reached the Geneva Conference of 1954 as an independent state, which greatly strengthened her negotiating position.

<sup>3</sup> Nationalization was apparently especially damaging in Battambang province, which traditionally produced Cambodia's largest exportable surplus of rice.

<sup>4</sup> Lon Nol had been active in the 1950's in a small monarchic political party opposed to the Democrats.

<sup>5</sup> See David Chandler, "Cambodia's Strategy of Survival," *Current History*, December, 1969, pp. 344 ff.

cial problems in the 1950's led Sihanouk to terminate United States aid programs in the fall of 1963, although such programs had informally covered Cambodia's continuing budget deficits since independence. Sihanouk's rejection of United States aid in effect removed the padding from the Cambodian budget and soon forced the kingdom to meet its perennial trade deficits with payments in hard currency. The deficits themselves increased as demands for manufactured goods, especially in Phnompenh, outpaced erratically controlled agricultural production. Sihanouk's nationalization of Cambodian banks and trading mechanisms in 1964 added opportunities for graft and bureaucratization to the problems at hand.<sup>3</sup> More significantly, the withdrawal of United States aid soon led to a deterioration of Cambodia's military equipment, which had come primarily from the United States. This downgrading had deep effects on the morale of Cambodia's officer corps, a close-knit group almost entirely loyal to General Lon Nol, the minister of defense in every Cabinet but one since 1955, and currently President of Cambodia's Council of Ministers.<sup>4</sup>

The intensification of the war in Vietnam in the late 1960's and Sihanouk's conviction that the Communists would emerge as winners there and thus become Cambodia's neighbors led him to give political support to the Communist cause and to permit Cambodian rice and other supplies to pass into Communist hands through illicit channels. The intrusion of United States troops into Vietnam in 1965-1966 and the intensified bombing of Laos and North Vietnam in 1966-1968 forced the Communists to use Cambodian territory first as a rest and staging area and later as their principal avenue of supply. The increasing Communist presence in Cambodia kept pace with Sihanouk's increasing doubts that the Communists could swiftly win the war, and in 1969 the Prince began to seek guarantees from other nations, especially in the West.<sup>5</sup>

Between 1966 and 1970, the Cambodian elite, including the officer corps, faced a difficult set of choices. First, they could permit

the Communist incursions, following Sihanouk's policy of assisting the Communists. Alternatively, they could view the Vietnamese as invaders, and fight. At the least risk to themselves lay a third and more corrupting choice, namely, to take the opportunity, whatever their own views, to make large sums of money trading with the Vietnamese.

The first choice was attractive to Cambodia's leftists and perhaps to much of the country's Vietnamese minority. It was imposed, moreover, on local military commanders who lacked the equipment, training and orders to resist. The second choice, through most of the 1960's, seemed suicidal, although a generalized hatred of the Vietnamese runs deep in most Cambodians. In the meantime, a great many people got rich; and as the war spilled over into Cambodia and the Vietnamese dug in, they began to feel guilty about it.<sup>6</sup>

The choices played across Sihanouk's mind as well. Characteristically, but without much hope, he sought a compromise solution. Assuming that illicit income had neutralized much of his own officer corps, Sihanouk sought to put diplomatic pressure on the Vietnamese by making overtures to the West.<sup>7</sup> His strategy was handicapped by the expansion of the war and the intransigence of the Vietnamese and of rightist opposition inside Cambodia. As his hand grew weaker, Sihanouk played for time. In a sense, he had no alternative, for he believed that confrontation with the Vietnamese would risk the war that has now begun. Also, he had good reasons to suspect the army's motives in seeking such a confrontation, for it now seems likely

<sup>6</sup> Cambodia, Ministry of Information, *Documents sur l'agression Vietcong et nord vietnamienne contre le Cambodge* (Pnompenh, 1970).

<sup>7</sup> See Bernard K. Gordon and Kathryn Young, "Cambodia: Following the Leader?" *Asian Survey*, February, 1970, pp. 169-176.

<sup>8</sup> For an interesting analysis, see Nayan R. Chanda, "The Four Year Coup," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 25, 1970, pp. 26-28.

<sup>9</sup> See John Thomson, "Interview with Sirik Matak," *Bangkok Magazine*, June 14, 1970. Sirik Matak had served as Sihanouk's ambassador to China.

<sup>10</sup> Gambler's losses allegedly reached a daily level of a million *riels* (c. U.S. \$200,000), which went directly to Sihanouk's staff.

that by 1969 several senior officers were seriously considering a coup d'état against him.<sup>8</sup>

## POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF THE 1960'S

Politically, the years 1966-1969 were characterized by rightist control of the National Assembly and growing disaffection among the commercial and intellectual elite. The leftists, discredited after the rural uprisings of 1967 and isolated by their pro-Vietnamese stand from other members of the elite, became correspondingly reckless. A series of theatrical compromises on Sihanouk's part between 1966 and 1969 (such as the abortive creation of a "counter-government") failed to reduce this polarization or to divert rightist efforts at extensive economic reform. In August, 1969, Sihanouk abdicated a considerable portion of power to a "government of salvation" under Lon Nol, aided by Sihanouk's cousin, Sisowath Sirik Matak, who was a zealous and efficient administrator. Sihanouk's motives for this move may have included a cynical hope that the new government would collapse. Some observers have said that the Prince himself at that time showed signs of a full-scale breakdown. Sihanouk probably thought that Lon Nol would balance and restrain Sirik Matak, whose zealousness and incorruptibility were alien to Sihanouk's style of rule.<sup>9</sup> But the effect of giving the two men power was to admit the bankruptcy of Sihanouk's military and economic policies.

Sirik Matak moved swiftly to devalue the *riel*, still pegged officially at the rate set for it by the French in the 1950's; later he ordered Cambodia's diplomatic missions to deal directly with his government, rather than with Sihanouk. He loosened Cambodia's banking regulations to attract foreign investment, and in December, 1969, he announced a sweeping program of economic reform which in effect dismantled Sihanouk's policy of "Buddhist socialism" and state control. Perhaps encouraged by Sirik Matak's successes, the Assembly stepped up its attacks on the corruptibility of Sihanouk's entourage, singling out the gambling casino in Pnompenh.<sup>10</sup>

In January, 1970, Sihanouk left Cambodia

for medical treatment and an extended rest in France, where Lon Nol had been living since October, 1969.<sup>11</sup> Power in Phnompenh fell to Sirik Matak, and throughout the winter he supervised a press campaign which pointed out the threat posed by the Vietnamese and stressed the bloody history of Cambodia's relations with Vietnam.<sup>12</sup> In February, after Lon Nol's return, a complex governmental fiscal maneuver rendered Cambodian currency held by the Vietnamese Communists temporarily worthless, thus making it impossible for them to purchase rice and other supplies from Cambodian peasants. In the same month, Lon Nol set plans in motion to increase the size of the Cambodian army by 25 per cent. It is likely that all these moves had Sihanouk's reluctant approval, and that the Prince hoped to use them to strengthen his hand in negotiations with the Vietnamese.

In early March, Sihanouk set out for home, planning to stop in Moscow and Peking to obtain guarantees against any more extensive North Vietnamese incursions. At this point, he probably feared United States intervention and an army coup. On March 11, government-sponsored demonstrations in Phnompenh destroyed the embassies of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front. While Sihanouk used the demonstrations as a bargaining counter with the U.S.S.R., Lon Nol presented the Vietnamese with an ultimatum requiring them to remove all their troops from Cambodia within three days. The Vietnamese temporized, and there were fiercer demonstrations in Phnompenh, this time directed

<sup>11</sup> He was recuperating from a serious accident and mourning his wife's death.

<sup>12</sup> This tactic backfired tragically in April, when large numbers of unarmed Vietnamese were killed by Cambodian soldiers in many parts of the country. See T. D. Allman's "The Night of the Long Knives," *Bangkok Post*, April 24, 1970.

<sup>13</sup> See Milton Osborne, "Cambodia: Runaway Coup d'état," *The Nation*, June 8, 1970, and "Cambodia Eyewitness: What Happened and Why," *U.S. News and World Report*, March 30, 1970.

<sup>14</sup> Although this analysis may seem to oversimplify the issues, the Assembly's decision on March 18, 1970, and much that has happened since, contain elements of a confrontation between a self-proclaimed father-figure and his recalcitrant, often elderly children.

against the city's Vietnamese population. Sihanouk was by then in Peking, where he delayed his return to Cambodia until March 24. This delay gave the army and the Assembly time and courage to move.<sup>13</sup>

In playing a losing game in his last few months as Chief of State, Sihanouk seems to have overestimated Lon Nol's loyalty to him and underestimated the loyalty of army commanders to Lon Nol. He also miscalculated the courage (or perhaps merely the rancor) of the National Assembly. He probably thought that the deep-running anti-Vietnamese feelings of so much of the population could be bent to meet his own shifting political requirements. Finally, he failed to realize the full control that Sirik Matak was able to exercise over the machinery of government.

As it turned out, Sihanouk made a much deeper miscalculation than any of these, over the years, by bargaining on his own indispensability. After nearly 30 years of power, he seemed often to confuse the affection, reverence and good manners of the Cambodian people with a willingness on their part to fight for, or even an eagerness to understand, his often contradictory policies. In 1969, Sihanouk still referred to himself (and was listed in the Phnompenh telephone book) as *Samdech euv* (literally, "Prince daddy") at a time when economic and social innovations, many of them Sihanouk's own, were enlarging, transforming and alienating the elite segments of Cambodian society. Nervous in the company of this elite, Sihanouk preferred his own Franco-Cambodian entourage and theatrical immersions among Cambodia's "little people," or peasants, whose agricultural yields, health and sense of inferiority he made little effort to improve.

Ironically, Sihanouk made the same mistake about the elite, and especially about the young, that the French had made about him. He presumed that it would take them a long time to grow up.<sup>14</sup> As he encouraged thousands of Cambodians to pour in and out of the country's schools and colleges, and as his communications media spread deeper into the countryside, a social and political dynamic developed. Large numbers of students,

among others, discovering that they had political interests of their own, passed out of Sihanouk's control. The extent of their defection, of course, was clear only after the coup. As for the peasants, Sihanouk's relations with them were theatrical, religious and arranged, requiring little of anyone in his absence. He was part of the way things were, and although the peasants smiled about him, the Prince met very few of their requirements, perhaps in part because they simply resisted being organized at all.<sup>15</sup>

Cambodia's sudden entrance onto the world scene in March and April, 1970, was an event that neither Cambodia nor the world was ready for, since they had hidden from each other for so long behind mutual indifference, misinformation and clichés. Many observers were surprised, for example, that Cambodian events and priorities failed to fit Vietnamese patterns and to respond to cold war analysis. In a similar way, some of the Cambodian leadership seemed baffled when the coup failed to produce massive infusions of United States aid. The reaction of both North and South Vietnam to the events of March and April was to expand the war into Cambodia—a move that seemed to meet some of the interests of both sides. For the South, the expansion offered a chance to pursue the North Vietnamese without worrying about the intervening population; for the North, expanding the war exposed the weakness of the American policy of withdrawal and also protected its flank against a "fascist" regime. The Vietnamese moves, in turn, were followed by the United States interven-

<sup>15</sup> The "loyalty" of the Cambodian peasantry to its leadership is certainly subject to negotiation, as the revolts and civil wars of the nineteenth century had dramatically revealed.

<sup>16</sup> Or more precisely, the old one, minus Sihanouk. The current Chief of State, Cheng Heng, held the position *pro tem*, under the constitution, while Sihanouk was in France.

<sup>17</sup> To attend an Indochinese "summit conference." See Jean Lacouture, "From Vietnam War to Indochina War," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1970.

<sup>18</sup> Sihanouk had condemned two of this Cabinet, Hou Yuon and Hu Nim, to death in 1967, and it is possible, in fact, that both were shot at that time. No photos have been released of the entire Cabinet. For Sihanouk's own views, see his article, "The Future of Cambodia," *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1970, pp. 1 ff.

tion of May and June. These dramatic events diverted attention from Cambodian politics and from the army's woeful state of training and equipment, while they showed the limits that would be placed on American military involvement.

Politically, the new regime<sup>16</sup> moved swiftly to consolidate its local and international position, and to dismantle Sihanouk's reputation. After a three-month campaign aimed at discrediting Sihanouk's family and entourage, a military tribunal condemned Sihanouk to death. By the fall of 1970, those in the bureaucracy and the elite who might earlier have welcomed Sihanouk's return seemed to have become reconciled to the new regime. The regime's major policy since assuming office, in turn, was to mobilize and militarize Cambodian society to meet what the government felt was primarily a military threat mounted by North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front. By September, the army had tripled in size (to approximately 140,000), and government officials and students were all in khaki. This militarization of Cambodian life will probably have far-reaching social and political effects.

#### A GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE

Sihanouk, in the meantime, remained in Peking, aside from short trips to Hanoi, North Korea and southern China.<sup>17</sup> In early May, he announced the formation of a government-in-exile, made up of members of his entourage and of extreme leftists who had been out of power in Cambodia for several years.<sup>18</sup> The Prince's presence in Peking seems to meet everyone's requirements but his own, for the Chinese can exploit his presence without dealing with him as a Chief of State and the Lon Nol regime has avoided the face-to-face confrontation which might have destroyed it in March or April. The North Vietnamese, finally, are free to fight in Cambodia on Sihanouk's behalf without the embarrassment of following his commands. Given Sihanouk's personality, it seems unlikely that he will attempt (or be allowed) to leave China until and unless Communist efforts among the Cambodian peasantry pro-

duce a full-scale civil war. Even then, it seems likely that the Communists will seek to circumscribe Sihanouk's role.

The Lon Nol government's greatest success thus far has been the orderly mobilization and politicization of the army, the bureaucracy and the students, especially in Phnompenh, whose population has almost doubled in the past six months.<sup>19</sup> The government's most important reform, aimed at replacing the monarchy with a republic, took effect on October 19, 1970. Actually, the monarchy has been moribund since the death of Sihanouk's father, King Norodom Suramarit, in 1960.<sup>20</sup> In his last decade of power, Sihanouk allowed the ceremonial aspects of the monarchy to be performed by his mother, Queen Kossamak, and he named no heir. The Prince was perhaps afraid that another member of the royal family, given the crown, might expand his power outward, as he himself had done. This fear also lies behind the government reform; and it meets the requirements of Son Ngoc Thanh and ex-members of the Democratic party who were active in the coup.<sup>21</sup> To accomplish these changes, the Lon Nol government is redrafting the Cambodian constitution; all evidence so far indicates that the new document will grant more power to elected officials than to the Chief of State.

After March 18, 1970, the Cambodian regime found itself in a war which was not of its own choosing and which, given its resources, it could not expect to win. Neither the United States nor Cambodia's new allies, Thailand and South Vietnam, have shown much eagerness to take on long-term or expensive com-

<sup>19</sup> From an estimated 800,000 to an estimated 1,400,000.

<sup>20</sup> Sihanouk abdicated the kingship in 1955.

<sup>21</sup> Thanh himself returned to Phnompenh in August, and is now a counselor to the Lon Nol regime, charged with recruiting ethnic Cambodians in South Vietnam. See T. D. Allman, "Dismantling the Monarchy," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 15, 1970. See also Lon Nol, "Message à la nation" in *Realités cambodgiennes*, September 18, 1970.

<sup>22</sup> Total United States aid promised to Cambodia in fiscal 1971, including this \$40 million, is \$49 million.

<sup>23</sup> See Nuon Khoeun, "La développement communautaire," in *Le Cambodge nouveau*, August, 1970, pp. 56-59.

mitments, and the United States offer of U.S. \$40 million, which came in August, was insufficient to meet Cambodia's long-term needs.<sup>22</sup> The Lon Nol government has responded to these rebuffs with a refreshing optimism and a sense of confidence in Cambodia's ability to solve her problems that contrasts sharply with Sihanouk's alternations of elation and despair. More important, the regime's promise to overhaul the hierarchical aspects of Cambodian society<sup>23</sup> is a bold move, especially since the people, most of whom are have-nots, are also being armed.

The future of Cambodia depends on several factors, including North Vietnamese intentions, the Lon Nol government's performance, and the continuing support of the army, the bureaucracy and the students for the regime's policy of confronting the Vietnamese. The future really depends, in the long run, on the Cambodian rice farmers who make up 70 per cent of the population and who are faced, in 1970, with economic dislocation, violence, and political dilemmas from which Sihanouk and the French shielded them for nearly 100 years. Although it is certain that the North Vietnamese would prefer a sympathetic government in Phnompenh, the risks and costs of installing such a regime have increased as the Lon Nol regime has dug in. Similarly, the Vietnamese would like to render the Cambodian army ineffective as a fighting force, but the effort may take more time and more troops than the Vietnamese want to use. To achieve these objectives economically, the Vietnamese have shifted their efforts to the countryside, where they are working hard to influence the Cambodian rice farmers. It is difficult to predict whether the peasants will resist these efforts, and whether the Lon Nol regime can take root outside the cities.

(Continued on page 364)

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*"... today Burma is not only a political backwater but also a curiously and chronically divided land that is retrogressing economically while striving to remain aloof from the major foreign policy problems of its own part of the world."*

## Burma: the Obscure Domino

BY RICHARD BUTWELL

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American University*

**B**URMA IS ENGAGED IN the longest continuously running civil war in Southeast Asia. The Burmese insurrection, which is actually several simultaneously occurring rebellions, has gone on without interruption for 22 years. Unlike Vietnam, there has never been a break in the hostilities comparable to Vietnam's post-Geneva years of 1954-1957.

Practically every identifiable group in Burma has raised the standard of armed revolt at one time or another, and most of these groups are still fighting the government today. All the principal indigenous ethnic minorities have warred against the government, and three different kinds of Communists have assaulted the country's non-Communist leadership. Furthermore, at no time since the late 1940's has the Rangoon government controlled more than two-thirds of the country. It may not control even that much today. Burma's northeasternmost corner, moreover, may have passed permanently into the hands of pro-Chinese elements.<sup>1</sup> In this connection, it is relevant that Burma has a longer

<sup>1</sup> For a recent and very detailed dispatch, see Henry Kamm's article from Rangoon in *The New York Times*, August 24, 1970.

<sup>2</sup> The worst years were 1966 and 1967, when gross national product dropped 11 per cent. For an accurate economic review, see Peter R. Kann's article from Rangoon in the *Wall Street Journal*, May 14, 1970.

<sup>3</sup> The writer visited Burma in June, 1970, and this and some subsequent judgments are based on his trip.

frontier with Communist China—1,200 miles —than any other Southeast Asian nation. In no other Southeast Asian country have subjects of China (ethnic kinsmen of the minorities of northern Burma) crossed the border to fight against its government. Nor have Chinese military elements anywhere else in Southeast Asia fought on the soil of a next-door neighbor.

As for progress, no country in Southeast Asia has made less economic progress since the end of World War II than Burma. In recent years, per capita gross national product, a good indicator of the average citizen's material welfare, has actually declined.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the present ruling regime of General Ne Win, who took over the government in a coup d'état for a second time in 1962, is probably the least popular regime in Southeast Asia. It stays in power only by force. Students, Buddhist monks and one-time (and now aging) civilian democratic politicians have been drained of almost all political life and resistance. These elements no longer seem capable of opposition to their country's heavy-handed soldier rulers; it is questionable whether they could effectively respond to a serious external challenge.<sup>3</sup>

### WHY NO "VIETNAM"?

Burma has survived relatively intact as a country largely by remaining aloof from political rivalries beyond her borders. There

are, however, several frightening points of similarity between present-day Burma and various Indochinese states in times past. General Ne Win is at least as unpopular as South Vietnam's late President Ngo Dinh Diem at the time of Diem's overthrow and murder in 1963—which threw already badly besieged Vietnam into even greater turmoil and led to the great American intervention. Communist control of northeastern Burma more than slightly resembles the original Communist Pathet Lao foothold in the northernmost provinces of Laos in the middle 1950's. And China provides for Communist insurgents in northern Burma today a far more protected sanctuary than Cambodia ever provided for the Vietcong.

Nonetheless, Burma has thus far escaped the fate of the badly divided Indochinese lands of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Why has she been able to do so?

To begin with, Burma's various rebels—Communists and ethnic minorities alike—have never been nearly so united as the Vietcong in Vietnam or the Pathet Lao in Laos.<sup>4</sup> Even the Communists have been variously divided: two different "White Flag" and "Red Flag" Communist insurrections have occurred in competition with one another since independence. Division within the ranks of the more important "White Flags" was dramatically demonstrated in 1969, when their longtime leader, Thakin Than Tun, was slain by a young follower after a party purge that followed the pattern of a Maoist "Cultural Revolution."

There was another factor, however. In the past, Burma's insurrectionists received very limited foreign help. When the "White Flag" Communist rebellion was being fiercely fought in central Burma—far from the border with China—there was little the Chinese

could do to assist their Burmese protégés. Situated far from the frontiers of their country, Burma's Communists could not be easily supplied from abroad—in the way that arms and ammunition have poured down the Ho Chi Minh Trail from North Vietnam to the insurgents in South Vietnam. In 1969, Ne Win's government reduced the "White Flag" uprising to its lowest level in more than a decade, making it not much more than a local nuisance.

But in the same year, a new Communist insurrectionary threat challenged the government, and this third Burmese Communist rebellion was in the north, adjacent to the Chinese border. Led by the able Kachin Naw Seng, a World War II guerrilla hero, this mixed force of Communists and various ethnic elements, many drawn from related racial minorities across the Chinese border, is trained and otherwise supported by Peking.

Like the other countries of mainland Southeast Asia, Burma's foreign policy has been rooted in internal considerations—particularly the country's chronic disunity and the near-consuming fear that China would intervene to take advantage of this weakness. Burma's foreign policy of neutrality after 1948 was designed to placate Peking and to avoid Chinese intervention in Burmese affairs, and for many years the Burmese were hailed for the wisdom of their approach. More recently, however, China has seemed to pay no practical attention to Burmese neutrality—raising the question of whether Burmese behavior ever really influenced Peking.<sup>5</sup> Certainly Burma's neutrality did not prevent China from encouraging Naw Seng's insurgents or from sending uniformed military elements across the frontier in 1969–1970 in obvious violation of Burmese sovereignty.

### INDOCHINA'S IMPACT

The impact of the Indochina war on Burma has so far been limited and indirect. This has been the result of the Rangoon government's aloofness in regional as well as global affairs, Thailand's role as a buffer between the Burmese and the Indochina fighting, and the fact that Burma has not hitherto been re-

<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of the reasons behind the failure of the "first round" of Burma's insurrections (during U Nu's first premiership, 1948–1958), see Frank N. Trager, *Burma, from Kingdom To Republic* (New York: Praeger, 1966), Chapter 6.

<sup>5</sup> This question was first raised as early as 1963 by William C. Johnston in his excellent study, *Burma's Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963). This study provides outstanding insight into Sino-Burmese relations today.

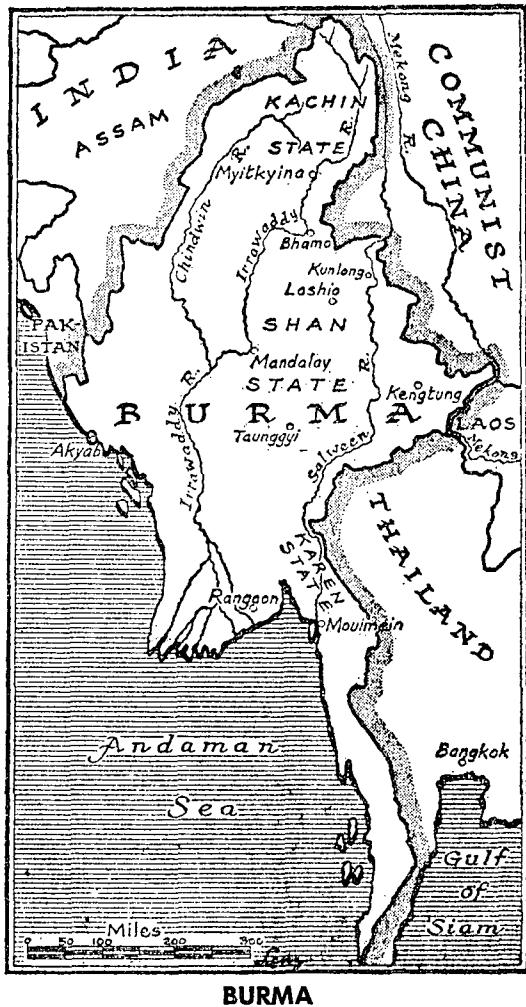
garded as an important target in the post-colonial Southeast Asian succession struggle.

When the Viet Minh were fighting the French in the years leading up to the 1954 Geneva settlement, the Ho Chi Minh movement maintained its most important English-language propaganda outlet (the Vietnam News Service) in Rangoon. Earlier still, reportedly there were attempts by the Vietnamese Communists to contact—indeed, possibly to form some sort of linkage with—like-minded Burmese elements. Although Burma initially recognized only North Vietnam, reflecting her sympathy with the Viet Minh's anti-French struggle, former Premier U Nu visited Ngo Dinh Diem in Saigon in the mid-1950's and subsequently exchanged diplomatic representatives with South Vietnam, too. In the later war between the two Vietnams, neutral Rangoon served as a diplomatic contact-point for various parties to the conflict, including the Americans, but even this role made the Burmese uneasy.

No major country in Asia has stood more aloof from the Indochina war, whatever its temporarily main theater, than Burma. The key to Burma's non-active as well as neutralist foreign policy has been her avoidance of more than modest friendship for any power, let alone an alliance relationship, for fear that such a state's enemies would then become her enemies. Given such a foreign policy outlook, it is not surprising that Burma tried to avoid involvement in the Indochina question. Escaping the impact of Indochina altogether, however, was a different matter. Even so, the impact has been surprisingly slight.

Burma shares a common, if short, frontier with one of the lands of Indochina, Laos. This border lies between the points where the Sino-Burmese frontier ends and the Thai-Burmese border begins. And the Chinese and the Thai have been very much involved in the Indochina war. Communist China has been North Vietnam's number two supplier and, more recently, has served as the chief

<sup>6</sup> In an early June, 1970, interview, Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman refused to admit that there is Thai support of Nu for this or related reasons, but other officials of the Foreign Ministry acquiesced in such an interpretation.<sup>6</sup>



BURMA

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architect of the forbidding alliance linking China with North Vietnam, the Vietcong, the Pathet Lao, and Prince Sihanouk's far from regal left-wing partisans in (and outside) Cambodia. China has also been road-building in northern Laos for several years—without the permission of Laos.

As for the Thai, they host the headquarters of the anti-Chinese SEATO military alliance, send troops into both Vietnam and Laos, allow the Americans to bomb Communist targets in both Vietnam and Laos from bases in Thailand, and support Bangkok-residing former Burmese Premier U Nu today as political insurance.<sup>6</sup>

If Thailand serves as a buffer for Burma against the full impact of the Indochina conflict, the Burmese themselves play a similar role in insulating India which—together with Pakistan—borders their country to the west. Some observers may have forgotten that the Japanese, occupying all of Southeast Asia to the east and south of Burma, aspired to extend their empire westward into British Burma from a Burmese base in World War II—but the Indian political leadership has not forgotten. Indian-Burmese relations are cordial, perhaps more so than Rangoon's relations with any other country, and the two nations cooperate closely to keep Naga and other northeastern Indian rebel elements from traveling to and from China through Burmese territory.

Collapse of the present non-Communist leadership in Laos would mean that Burma would have a border with a second Communist country—with all this means in a part of the world where sanctuary may be the most important kind of assistance unfriendly governments can give insurgent elements in adjacent lands. If the Indochina war led to a weakened or changed government in Thailand, the problem would be worsened far beyond the very considerable fears of Burma's government. Likewise, the sudden collapse of the Ne Win government, if it were adroitly exploited by Peking (as in the case of Cambodia), would confront the Thai with a serious security threat on all their land frontiers.<sup>7</sup>

Indochina's impact on Burma may lie largely in the future. But this does not mean that the war has not already influenced Burma—both in the present and in the past. General Ne Win's second seizure of power in 1962 was at least partly motivated by a fear of Laos-

<sup>7</sup> See the author's "Nixon Doctrine: Two Policies in Southeast Asia," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1970.

<sup>8</sup> This point is treated in the author's *U Nu of Burma*, rev. ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 240–241.

<sup>9</sup> See the writer's "U Nu's Second Comeback Try," *Asian Survey*, November, 1969.

<sup>10</sup> See the assessment of *The New York Times'* Henry Kamm in his long Rangoon dispatch in the issue of September 3, 1970.

like division of his country—stemming from the alleged efforts of the Shans and Karens in eastern Burma to find foreign supporters (probably not Communists) for their separatist sentiments.<sup>8</sup>

Burma's development since 1962 has mainly been the result of four factors: the military-civilian rivalry (which persists today in the form of U Nu's campaign to unseat Ne Win),<sup>9</sup> chronic internal disunity, deep-seated Burmese hatred of traditional overseas Indian and Chinese economic exploitation (which prompted the forced wholesale departure of members of both groups in the 1960's, and the economically unsuccessful "Burmese Way to Socialism"), and an almost universal fear of China. Only one of these factors was external—and this related to China, not to Indochina. If Indochina's greatest impact does in fact lie in the future, Burma's internal condition may still decisively influence how great that impact will be.

## POLITICS BURMESE STYLE

To all appearances, Burma's military dictatorship is very solidly entrenched.<sup>10</sup> It would be difficult to claim that a government monopolizes the use of force in a country that has as many rebellions as Burma, but it can be stated that none of the groups opposed to the Ne Win regime seems likely to depose it in the foreseeable future. Burma's soldier-rulers may not control the northeastern corner of the country (where the Communists have recently asserted themselves), but it is unlikely that the Communists will be able to unseat the Rangoon government in the near future.

The other insurgents are even less likely to topple the Ne Win regime. The Shans, Karens and Kachins still possess numerous forces in the field, but these minorities are unlikely to command much support among the majority Burmese, who constitute three-fourths of the inhabitants of the country. The Shans, moreover, are badly divided, while not all Kachins opposed to the Ne Win government follow Naw Seng's leadership.

The Karens are still strong in eastern Burma, although they have less strength than they had. They could probably take over any

town at any time from the government but probably lack the strength to hold it when the regime seeks to recover it. The Karens, together with the Mons, are the two minorities supporting Bangkok-based ex-Premier U Nu, and, if others followed suit, Ne Win could find himself in trouble.<sup>11</sup>

Nu's efforts to topple the Ne Win regime, however, are generally not given much chance of success. The most optimistic observers close to the scene say that Nu might be able to exploit the resulting vacuum if Ne Win were somehow otherwise removed from the scene, but they do not envisage Nu himself ousting the general with his present level of support and strength. Since April, 1970, Nu has been beaming broadcasts to Burmese listeners<sup>12</sup> from changing locations along the Thai-Burmese border, although for diplomatic reasons these broadcasts have not openly identified the ex-Premier as their sponsor.

The content of these broadcasts seems stale to persons familiar with personal and policy criticisms of Burma's military leaders through the years. But Nu and his advisers believe that what has long been known, or believed, by the Rangoon masses may not be familiar to their counterparts in the countryside. Such old grievances as the killing of Rangoon University students eight years ago are among the subjects stressed in Nu's broadcasts.

<sup>11</sup> The author, a biographer of Nu, met with the former Burmese leader on three occasions in Bangkok in early June, 1970.

<sup>12</sup> The "Patriotic Youth Front Radio," as the station calls itself, was first described in the *Bangkok Post*, April 27, 1970.

<sup>13</sup> Typical of Nu's efforts to "expose" the "profiteering" of high military personnel (and so turn their juniors against them) is the following from the manuscript of an early broadcast: "Colonel Aung Pe, a divisional commander, was known widely for smuggling opium and gold. Ne Win knew of this but did not take action as he himself is a smuggler. Instead, he encourages the lesser commanders to do smuggling in keeping with the parable of 'the tail-less fox telling the other foxes to be handsome like himself by cutting off their tails.'"

<sup>14</sup> Not only did the Burmese talk with the writer about Nu's broadcasts, but tourists visiting the country reported the same experience.

<sup>15</sup> See the article by Chanchal Sarkar in *The Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), August 13, 1969.

<sup>16</sup> See *Working People's Daily* (Rangoon), March 29, 1970.

A second target-group is more numerically limited, although possibly more important politically: the younger, allegedly dissatisfied army officers and the enlisted personnel in Burma's military services. The politically realistic Nu knows that the odds are high against his ousting Ne Win as long as the military remains united. In his broadcasts, the ex-Premier is clearly trying to further dis-sension within the ranks of Burma's soldiers.<sup>13</sup> How many potential military dissidents hear ex-Premier Nu's broadcasts is open to question, but many other listeners hear them. In Rangoon, in mid-1970, the writer was impressed with the clarity of the reception of Nu's broadcasts and the willingness of strangers to discuss them.<sup>14</sup>

This is not Nu's first bid for support within the ranks of the military, which remains the single most important obstacle to his attempt to restore democratic government in Burma. In 1969, before he fled the country to India and, later, to Thailand, Nu was repeatedly seen publicly with ex-Brigadier Aung Gyi, once one of Ne Win's closest advisers, who subsequently lost favor (as others have done) with the general.<sup>15</sup> The strategy was clearly to link Nu with Aung Gyi in the eyes of the latter's friends in the armed services.

Nobody can say whether or not there is a possibility of early fragmentation of the hitherto solid support for General Ne Win among his country's fellow soldiers. The March, 1970, removal of Brigadier Tin Pe from his post as Minister of Trade Development and Cooperatives was interpreted by some observers as a triumph for the supporters of Brigadier San Yu, the number two man in the Burmese military hierarchy. There were other reasons, however, which could explain the change—not least of all Tin Pe's failing health. But the same month Navy Vice Chief of Staff Commodore Thaung Tin warned that "destructive elements" were trying to "set the members of the armed forces against one another."<sup>16</sup>

The formation of a "united front" by U Nu and various Karen and Mon leaders in Bangkok in June, 1970, was a modest breakthrough in the former Premier's effort to put

together a coalition of opponents of Ne Win's rule.<sup>17</sup> Missing from the alliance, however, were such important peoples as the Shans and Kachins. Nu told the writer in Bangkok in June, 1970, that he hoped to establish a "presence" in Burma—meaning his own presence—by the year's end. There is no shortage of arms for opposition elements in Southeast Asia today as the Vietnam war winds down, but in mid-1970 Nu was having trouble finding the money to buy such arms.<sup>18</sup>

The early fall of Ne Win cannot be predicted and probably will not occur. However, in a part of the world in which such seemingly secure political fixtures as Sihanouk and Sukarno fell from power unexpectedly in the recent past, the possibility of Ne Win's ouster should not be overlooked. Its impact on various nearby states—Thailand, India and even China as well as the Indochina states—might be considerable. And it could prove to be the occasion for drawing Burma, however much against the will of her various leaders since independence, into the great mainland Southeast Asian post-colonial succession struggle.

### BURMA'S ECONOMY

Before World War II, Burma was the world's leading exporter of rice. Today, she is the fourth most important—trailing Thailand, the United States and the United Arab Republic. Even so, the Burmese are having trouble marketing their surplus grain and might experience greater difficulty in the future in light of the growing self-sufficiency in rice of many of their traditional customers.

<sup>17</sup> The writer met in Bangkok with the Karen insurgent leader Mahn Ba Zan and Mon rebel Nai Shwe Kyin—as well as Nu—shortly after the formalization of this pact.

<sup>18</sup> See also Hugh D. S. Greenway, "Which Is the Burma Road—Ne Win or U Nu?" *The New York Times Magazine*, May 3, 1970.

<sup>19</sup> The revival of cooperatives, abandoned in 1964, to improve the distribution of consumer goods was announced in June, 1970. See *The Financial Times* (London), June 18, 1970.

<sup>20</sup> The lead editorial in the June 14, 1970, *Guardian* (Rangoon), "Optimism, Industry & Socialist Economy," left no doubt that Burma would continue her "import substitution" trade policy (as contrasted with exporting her most efficiently derived products to world markets and using the proceeds to buy whatever else she needs).

Burma's economic problems are by no means limited to the marketing of her declining rice surplus (which rose to 600,000 tons in 1969 after dropping from 1,800,000 to 330,000 tons between 1962 and 1968). Her other troubles derive either from the ill-conceived and badly managed "Burmese Way to Socialism" or from the persistently troubled security situation in the country. The "Burmese Way to Socialism" rid the country of its often exploitative Indian and Chinese business communities but substituted ill-prepared military managers, most of whom had absolutely no relevant experience with regard to their new responsibilities. The result was an almost unbelievable maldistribution of available goods and, increasingly, chronic shortages that could not be alleviated even by the best distribution system.<sup>19</sup>

Alternative sources of badly needed foreign exchange might include greater, or renewed, exports of teak and other woods, petroleum, various other minerals and precious gems. But various insurgent groups dominate or disrupt the areas where such resources are located. Moreover, Burma's technical competence, not to mention her capital, for the development of such resources precludes more than modest initial accomplishment—even if the security situation were not so serious.<sup>20</sup> The Indonesians and Malaysians are seeking to tap their considerable offshore oil deposits with the help of foreign companies, including Americans, but Burma has denied herself such an option.

### THE FUTURE

Burma is one of the most important lands in her part of the world, but simultaneously, (Continued on page 364)

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*"If . . . self-reliance is being forced on Prime Minister Razak, there is no doubt that he sees its domestic advantage. At the level of symbol-wielding and ideology formation, self-reliance is good for the national ego. . . ."*

## Creeping Self-Reliance in Malaysia

BY STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

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**A**FTER THIRTEEN YEARS of national independence, Malaysia has experienced her first succession of chief executives. Whereas in many new states such successions have been steeped in crisis, in Malaysia the process was orderly and unremarkable. For some years the only question had been not who but when, and that was answered in August, 1970, when Tunku Abdul Rahman, the 67-year-old Prime Minister, announced that he would relinquish power in September to his heir apparent of long standing, Tun Abdul Razak.

As foreign minister and number two man in the ruling Alliance party, Razak had been an integral part of Malaysia's government. In fact, as chairman of the National Operations Council (N.O.C.) he was regarded by some observers as having taken charge well before the formal change of leadership. The N.O.C. has been Malaysia's de facto governing body since the suspension of Parliament during the post-election racial disturbances of May, 1969, and Razak's practical experience in governance thus was enormous. Rather than marking a "quiet coup d'etat,"<sup>1</sup> however, Razak's expanded role in top-level decision-making probably should be regarded as the final step in the Tunku's careful preparations for the succession. In any case, the change of leadership was so gentle that it

seemed unlikely to produce any significant changes in policy.

In his first official news conference after the Tunku's retirement announcement, Razak stated that he would like to see United States troops withdrawn from Vietnam, as if to demonstrate that he would chart a new course. By itself, this announcement appeared to indicate a new foreign policy direction; in the context of Razak's other remarks, of long-term shifts in Malaysia's international posture and of changing circumstances in the international environment, however, advocacy of an American withdrawal constituted an incremental change consistent with a gradual trend toward increased self-reliance.

In the first place, Malaysia's support for the United States military effort in Indochina was never particularly energetic. As recently as Vice President Spiro Agnew's three-day visit in January, 1970, some Malaysian leaders paid lip service to United States policy in Vietnam. But the nearest Malaysia has come to providing tangible support was to allow the cities of Kuala Lumpur and Penang to be used as rest and recreation sites by the United States military. This lack of enthusiasm is not the result of ambivalent feelings with regard to communism; prevailing attitudes among the masses as well as the elite are anti-Communist. It is just that the war in Vietnam has been a remote threat relative

<sup>1</sup> Peter Simms, "A Quiet Coup in K.L.," *Life Magazine* (Asian edition), July 21, 1970.

to other national security problems. Some of these problems, like the Emergency of the 1950's—an insurrection of dissident overseas Chinese—have involved communism directly. Others, like Indonesia's "confrontation" of Malaysia in 1963-1966, the dispute with the Philippines concerning possession of the North Bornean territory of Sabah, and rivalry with Singapore (which is seen as a source of excessive Chinese influence) have involved communism indirectly, if at all.

From Razak's perspective, therefore, the "new" position on Vietnam was a pragmatic response consonant with the broad outlines of Malaysia's overall foreign policy, and not a new departure at all. As he explained it:

Our policy in regard to Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and all countries is clear. We would like the people of all these countries to be left alone to settle their internal affairs themselves. We made it clear at the Jakarta conference that all foreign troops, regular and irregular, should be withdrawn—the same with Vietnam—so that the Vietnamese people and the Cambodian people can determine their future themselves. This is the view of non-aligned countries, of which we are a member.<sup>2</sup>

The stand which Malaysia took at the Jakarta conference on Cambodia was only one of several manifestations of a more independent foreign policy. Normalization of diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union, initiated in 1967 and implemented since then, was an earlier indication of the direction of Malaysia's foreign policy. Perhaps the most significant policy reversal in view of the domestic situation of the overseas Chinese (discussed below) was Malaysia's decision to support the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. The fact that the Tunku announced this position several weeks prior to his resignation rather firmly establishes Razak's subsequent ad-

vocacy of American disengagement from Vietnam as an incremental, rather than an abrupt, change in policy.

One international event that encouraged Malaysian leaders to display an independent foreign policy was the conference of non-aligned nations held in Lusaka, Zambia, in September, 1970. Malaysia's status as a non-aligned country had been suspect in the past, and again in 1970 questions were raised about her participation. Both Tunku Abdul Rahman and Razak clearly felt that participation in this first major nonaligned conference since 1964 was important to Malaysia, and they correctly calculated the favorable effect that her revised positions on China and on Vietnam would have on Malaysia's eligibility.

In the long run, however, the policies of the major powers, especially the United Kingdom and the United States, provided the context in which increasing self-reliance became not only rational but essential. As a former British colony which was granted sovereignty before mounting a nationalist revolution, Malaysia has retained close ties with Britain. To the extent that these ties depend upon defense assistance, they were weakened by the planned withdrawal of British military forces from East of Suez by 1971. Malaysian leaders were relieved by the victory of the Conservative party in the British parliamentary elections of June, 1970. At best, however, even though the Conservatives had objected to the scope and pace of the withdrawal, their election victory only served to give the Malaysians more time to prepare for a greatly diminished British military presence.

Next to security, the most important dimension in the Malaysia-United Kingdom relationship is trade, and here too Malaysia's dependency is decreasing. The Malaysian economy remains geared to foreign trade, but not exclusively to trade with Great Britain or with free world countries generally. In the first six months of 1969, Malaysian export earnings were in excess of \$1.8 billion. Of this amount, which was \$300 million greater than the figure for the comparable period in 1968, only \$107.4 million, or 6 per cent, was derived from trade with Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *The New York Times*, September 7, 1970. The fact that the *Bangkok Post* applauded this statement suggests that flexibility and independence of foreign policy may be catching in Southeast Asia. See *Straits Times* (Singapore), September 8, 1970, and Kenneth Young's article on Thailand in this issue of *Current History*.

<sup>3</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1970 Yearbook, p. 197.

Meanwhile, mainland China is increasing her purchases of Malaysian exports more rapidly than any other major trading partner, and the Soviet Union continues to be the leading consumer of Malaysia's principal export commodity, rubber.

Trade with the United States is increasing, but United States foreign policy figures more significantly in Malaysia's international relations. Generally, the concepts of a "low profile" in Asia, Vietnamization and Asian resolutions of Asian problems sound to Malaysians like echoes of British Southeast Asian policy. What the United States does has less immediate impact on Malaysia than what England does, but in the long run decreased United States involvement—especially in neighboring Thailand—would be a crucial factor in the calculations of Malaysian policy-makers.

Aside from Malaysia's specific positions on Vietnam and on Chinese participation in the United Nations, the detailed policy implications of Malaysia's increasing diplomatic flexibility have yet to unfold. Perhaps the most important hints of her evolving response to the changing security situation in Southeast Asia lie in her intensified relations with other countries in the region. In terms of instrumental security policy, the most noteworthy recent example is the agreement on border cooperation between Thailand and Malaysia signed in early March, 1970. Under the terms of this accord, each country's forces are free to conduct counterinsurgency operations in the other's territory and some joint maneuvers already have been carried out. A second example, this one more symbolic but no less meaningful, occurred two weeks after the signing of the Malaysian-Thai border agreement, when President Suharto of Indonesia paid a state visit to Malaysia. In addition to generating friendship and inaugurate-

ing boundary treaties, the visit inspired a continuing exchange of friendly gestures between Malaysia and her largest neighbor. This included a statement by Indonesia's foreign minister that Indonesian troops would help defend Malaysia from Communist aggression should the war spread that far.<sup>4</sup>

Bilateral relations with the Philippines and Singapore also seemed to be improving during 1970, but they continued to be impeded by the Sabah dispute, in the case of the Philippines, and by the continuing distrust which caused and was intensified by the expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965. The most fruitful channel of interaction between Malaysia and these two countries is probably regional cooperation. Indeed, participation in the most recent effort at regional organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (A.S.E.A.N.), appears to be a dominant theme in the orchestration of a more independent foreign policy. Given Southeast Asia's record in the realm of regional cooperation, A.S.E.A.N.'s prospects are not being exaggerated even by the members. For nations with the limited resources of Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, however, regional organization may be the only viable alternative to alignment with a non-Asian power or bloc.<sup>5</sup>

## DOMESTIC POLITICS

One of A.S.E.A.N.'s appeals to the Malaysian political elite is the sensitivity of geographical neighbors to Malaysia's internal security problems. Whereas the major powers' concern for stability in Southeast Asia has led them to concentrate on international communism and on Indochina, circumstances have forced each of the A.S.E.A.N. countries to devote more attention and energy to domestic insurgencies or civil disorders. The old problem of guerrilla activity along the Malaysian-Thai border, which has never attracted much international attention because of its local character, is treated by the Malaysians as a primary security problem. To Malaysians, the agreement with Thailand on policing the border area thus represented a gratifying sharing of priorities in which non-

<sup>4</sup> *Current History*, July, 1970, "Indonesia," p. 59. Malaysia and Indonesia have been conducting joint counterinsurgency operations in the Sarawak-Kalimantan border areas for some time.

<sup>5</sup> For a review of A.S.E.A.N. projects and activities see T. T. B. Koh, "International Collaboration Concerning Southeast Asia," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, July, 1970, pp. 18-26.

Asians were most unlikely to participate.

Of course, the threat of internal subversion is not confined to border areas because, as the government sees it, this threat is inextricably linked to the basic fact of Malaysian social life—communalism. And even though their borders and direct interests may not be involved, neighboring states in Southeast Asia are expected by Malaysians to be more understanding because communalism (and, specifically, communalism including a Chinese sector) is a part of their own experience. The difference is that in Malaysia the Chinese minority is much larger than it is elsewhere (except in Singapore, where the Chinese constitute about four-fifths of the population) and the indigenous Malays do not even constitute a majority of the population.

Communalism means not only that the population is ethnically fragmented, but also that each ethnic community has its own relatively self-contained social structure. Few social institutions are shared. The three major communities have different occupational patterns. Malays dominate the agricultural sector; Chinese are concentrated in commerce; and Indians gravitate toward plantation jobs, some specialized retailing and certain professions. But this is less important for the interdependence which it promotes than for the differences in life-styles which it sustains. The three great traditions which Malaysian ethnic groups represent would be somewhat conflictive and competitive in any case; it is their social and physical separation, however, which encourages misinformation, stereotyping and fear, and it is these qualities of Malaysian life which in turn create particularly difficult problems for the political system.

The most basic challenge to the political system is to avoid paralysis and disintegration. The old formula by means of which at least this minimal task was achieved called for communal parties under the leadership of elites who could work together in the Alliance party, the umbrella political organization which would control the government. During the first dozen years of independence, the three constituent parties—the United Malays

National Organization (U.M.N.O.), the Malaysian Chinese Association (M.C.A.), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (M.I.C.)—faced only scattered opposition, and the formula seemed to be working. The second national parliamentary elections in 1964 saw the Alliance increase both its share of the popular vote and its control of Parliament. Some observers attributed the outcome to the unifying effect of Indonesia's "confrontation" of Malaysia, but for the most part their analyses were ignored.

In retrospect, the hypothesis that the electorate's support of the government in 1964 was significantly influenced by Indonesian President Sukarno's threats appears to have deserved more attention. The size of the Alliance's victory in 1964 indicated continued success for that organization. But in 1969, there was no immediate external threat to the nation, and opposition parties, still poorly organized and disunited, registered surprising electoral gains. Even though the Alliance retained firm control in Parliament, supporters of such opposition parties as the *Gerakan* (Malaysian Peoples Movement) and the Democratic Action party saw cause to celebrate in the streets. The celebrations provoked counterdemonstrations, and three days after the election the capital city, Kuala Lumpur, was engulfed in bitter racial warfare.

In the year and a half since the disorders of May, 1969, the political life of the country has been more or less immobilized, and it is in this precarious context that Tun Abdul Razak was installed as Prime Minister in September, 1970. The old formula has not been totally abandoned, but two crucial deficiencies may render it unworkable. First, the elections showed that the M.C.A. has lost a great deal of support in the Chinese community. Without more meaningful Chinese participation than the M.C.A. now appears able to provide, the Alliance cannot pose as an integrative political party. Second, Razak himself may be unable to make the formula work as the Tunku did. Whereas the Tunku projected the image of a relaxed and generous patriarch, Razak's style is that of the

efficient, disinterested administrator. There is open speculation in Kuala Lumpur about the new Prime Minister's ability to win the confidence of Chinese and Indians.

The security forces used to contain the racial disturbances of May, 1969, have been beefed up since and, as other political institutions have lost their integrative touch, the potential role of police and military forces in domestic politics has increased. However, since governance by coercive force is not an attractive alternative to Malaysian elites or masses, a new formula is being sought. In fact, now that the lifting of the suspension of Parliament has been announced and scheduled for February, 1971, it may be reasonable to infer that Malaysian leaders think they have successfully rebuilt their political machinery.

### SEARCH FOR NEW FORMULA

The search for a new formula has been clearly visible to the outside observer. But the formula itself, if it has been discovered, is less apparent. Although the National Operations Council was charged in the aftermath of the riots both with governing the country and with evaluating and restructuring the political system, it generally has not been regarded as anything other than an interim response to a temporary crisis of authority. Two N.O.C. creations, however, appear to be at the heart of the restructuring effort. One of these, the National Consultative Council, is a body composed of representatives of political parties and social and occupational categories. In announcing the names of the 65 members appointed to the N.C.C. by the N.O.C., Razak said:

The way is now open for the people to make a positive contribution to finding permanent solutions to our racial problems to ensure that the May 13 tragedy does not recur and that there will be uninterrupted peace and stability in this country.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, the N.C.C. was intended

<sup>6</sup> *Straits Times* (Kuala Lumpur), January 13, 1970.

<sup>7</sup> The background and progress of the Department of National Unity are discussed in R. S. Milne, "National Ideology" and Nation-Building in Malaysia," *Asian Survey*, July, 1970, pp. 563-573.

to remedy a deficiency of input from the public to the government.

The Department of National Unity, on the other hand, was based on the premise that the basic problem in the Malaysian political system was the lack of loyalty to the nation. The primary task of the Department of National Unity, therefore, was to develop a national ideology. The two analyses and approaches represented by the N.C.C. and the D.N.U. might well complement and support one another; that is, the government must be more attentive to the people, and the people must develop a more widely shared interest in preserving and developing the country. The first is a matter of governmental responsiveness, while the second is perceived as a matter of governmental steering. That the Malaysian elite is much more concerned about the latter, however, is indicated by the facts that the D.N.U. was formed earlier, was made to appear more permanent, and was given more emphasis and resources than the N.C.C.

Not surprisingly, a national ideology has not yet been presented by the D.N.U.<sup>7</sup> When and if it is presented, it will not resolve the specific domestic issues facing Razak's new government. Perhaps foremost among these is the complex problem of education. Education is an object of political attention partly because it is seen as the key to technological progress, and also because it is seen as the key to the promotion of certain cultural values. Each racial sector would like its own culture to prevail generally and not only in the schools that its children attend. The most conspicuous indicator of a school's cultural bias is the language of instruction. Briefly, the government's policy in this area calls for the gradual conversion of English language schools to Malay, the national language. The symbolism of this policy offends non-Malays, who make extensive use of the prestigious English-language high schools and the University of Malaya. At the same time, Malays complain that the policy is only symbolic and does little to alter the fact that ". . . those who have gone through the national-language stream are receiving the

worst part of the bargain, be it in schools, colleges, or even universities."<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps inevitably, one of the government's reactions to demands in the area of education has been to expand the university system. Throughout most of the period of independence, the University of Malaya was the only university in the country. It has maintained high academic standards, but the university has developed programs to increase the proportionately small enrollment of Malays only recently. The government discovered that creating new institutions like the MARA Institute of Technology and the National University was a more painless way of expanding Malay access to higher education. To redress any imbalance which this policy may have caused, a new university in Penang and a Chinese university (Tunku Abdul Rahman College) were authorized. The result has been that in the last two years the structure of higher education has begun to reflect the communal divisions of the society in the same way that primary and secondary schools do.

Apart from shaping the racial composition of the university student population, these recent developments obviously have greatly increased the projected numbers of university graduates. One problem which the Malaysian elite has been spared so far is campus activism—not because students have had fewer complaints than they have in other countries but because there have been fewer students. Expanded university enrollments may change that situation. More importantly, it is not at all clear that university graduates entering the job market in larger numbers will find suitable employment. Most economic indicators for Malaysia have been so favorable that one is tempted to conclude that the effective performance of the economic system has carried and will carry the political system through its periods of crisis. Unemployment blemishes the economic outlook, however, and this problem

may have far reaching political consequences. At the end of August, 1969, government sources reported 142,545 unemployed, an increase of 15 per cent over the January, 1969, figure.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, most observers feel that underemployment is increasing rapidly.

The same government data show that unemployment is highest among youths in the 15-to-24 age category. A National Youth Development Corps was established in 1969 to train young men in needed skills and, not incidentally, to provide them with military training. Since the overwhelming majority of recruits to this program are Malays, the pattern of Malay predominance in both regular and irregular military and police units is preserved, and the job training program also contributes to national security.

The implication of this apparent link between domestic and international policy is worth emphasizing, for it exemplifies the basic dynamics of Malaysian politics. National security in Malaysia is first and foremost a matter of internal politics. Because the government—in contrast to the economy—is mainly in Malay hands, it is appropriate, if not essential, that security forces be mainly Malay. This is not only a matter of keeping the other races down; it is doubtful that very many Chinese want to join the armed forces.

It would be overly cynical to argue that domestic insecurity is the real reason for Malaysia's more independent foreign policy. If the United Kingdom and the United States were offering extensive and tangible economic and military support, it is unlikely that Malaysia would refuse it. In fact, at the Lusaka meeting, Razak urged the United States, the U.S.S.R., and China to negotiate and enforce the neutralization of all Southeast Asia.<sup>10</sup> The proposal was so out of step with present

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<sup>8</sup> Zainal Abidin Wahid, "Random Thoughts on Education," *Opinion* (Kuala Lumpur), April–May, 1969, p. 234.

<sup>9</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1970 Yearbook, p. 191.

<sup>10</sup> *Singapore Herald*, September 11, 1970.

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*"The folly of embroiling Thailand secretly and expeditiously in the war in Vietnam instead of facilitating Thailand's crucial contribution, vital leadership and special role in the more significant long-range task of structuring and powering Southeast Asian regionalism has been expensive," writes this specialist, who maintains that "Our involvement of Thailand in the military operations of the Indochina war may have compromised that essential role and complicated Thailand's efforts to promote regional political solutions to the Cambodian problem."*

## Thailand and the Cambodian Conflict

BY KENNETH T. YOUNG

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**I**N 1970, CAMBODIAN developments hit Thailand hard and unexpectedly, like a sudden seismic shock. They widened existing strains, such as the Thai-United States misunderstanding, and provoked new stresses as to whether or not to send Thai troops into Cambodia. According to several independent Thai observers, Thailand faced the "serious dangers" of Communist invasion, economic trouble and the struggle for power.<sup>1</sup> The *London Times* correspondent for Southeast Asia was undoubtedly correct in reporting that "nowhere more acutely than in Thailand has the eruption of war next door in Cambodia precipitated uncomfortable reappraisal."<sup>2</sup>

Compared to the recent past, 1970 saw a marked increase in Thai problems. During 1965-1970, while the external threat was not quite so close to Thailand's frontier, Thailand kept internal insurgency at a low level. During those five years, Thai-American relations were close and cordial; warnings of hazards below the surface went unheeded. During the decade 1960-1970, Thailand's economy boomed ahead on an 8 per cent annual growth rate, a favorable export market, sub-

stantial United States aid, a large capital inflow and capable economic management. In 1970, export earnings began to drop; there was a decrease in United States aid, a decline in the balance of payments, and an increase in the budget deficit. Many stresses were already rapidly converging on Thailand when the Cambodian crisis exploded.

The extension of Communist military operations throughout much of Cambodia accentuated external pressures on Thailand. It erased the only remaining relatively secure portion of Thailand's frontier, and it created a new strategic base area for a new multinational Communist front in the center of Indochina. It precipitated another direct, bufferless confrontation between the Thais and the "Tonkinese" in the historic pattern of Southeast Asia power balancing. Finally, the Cambodian affair embroiled Thailand in differences of opinion with her Asian friends and her American ally, testing the reality of Asian solidarity and the solidity of the alliance with the United States.

Hostilities in western Cambodia, affecting some 600 miles of the Thai-Cambodian border, mean that the entire frontier, about 3,000 miles of porous, vulnerable land and sea frontiers, is open to infiltration or attack. A Chinese Communist guerrilla movement, a

<sup>1</sup> *Bangkok Post*, August 12, 1970, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times* (London), September 3, 1970, p. 1.

spill-over from the old Malayan insurgency of the 1950's, endangers the southern frontier. The long mountainous border with Burma to the west and north of Thailand—only some 75 air miles from China — will remain unstable and dangerous as long as Chinese-sponsored rebels fight the Burmese government in the Kachin and Shan states northwest of Thailand. In Laos, the Chinese Communists keep pushing an all-weather road down to the Mekong River near Nan Province in the north, where tribal insurgency supported by China has increased. Meanwhile, the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao push closer and closer to the Mekong border in central and southern Laos.

Until the spring of 1970, Thailand's Cambodian flank remained relatively secure, fortunately buffered by an ostensibly neutral and fairly united nation between Thailand and the Communist Vietnamese forces in and around South Vietnam. Now these forces have penetrated into western Cambodia, where they operate politically and militarily right up to the Thai border. For centuries, Thailand's eastern flank has been especially sensitive. At various times Bangkok directly controlled it, but today the frontier with Cambodia has been established, and Thailand endorses Cambodia's neutrality and integrity. Yet Thailand, too, must have her own "*Ostpolitik*," because this eastern frontier provides easy, quick access to Bangkok and the central plain, the cultural, political and economic heart of Thailand. Thais are worried about "the prospect of seeing hostile hordes along the 1,000-mile eastern border, poised to pounce on our cities and towns," as Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman vividly described the outlook from the Thai viewpoint.<sup>3</sup>

As long as this danger exists, the Cambodian conflict will place a heavy burden on Thailand's defense. For some time to come, the Thai will have to support a coherent frontier policy around this whole long periphery. This will be complicated and expensive, involving political, economic and social, and security measures, all more vigor-

ously executed by the Thais themselves than heretofore. Lest Americans minimize the danger of this encirclement, it should be noted that the total north-south length of Thailand is about 1,100 miles, roughly the distance between Boston and Miami, or between Canada and Mexico straight down the west coast of the United States.

The war in Cambodia has confronted Thailand and Southeast Asia with two new problems of politico-military significance: an enlarged Communist base and a multinational Communist confederation. North Vietnam's forces have taken over most of southern Laos and the northern half of Cambodia while retaining control of the mountainous frontier of South Vietnam. This interior territory is being integrated into a strategic base area from which to launch attacks east, south and west. It is a much more advantageous "sanctuary" than the smaller and unconnected areas North Vietnam enjoyed in the early 1950's, before the Geneva settlement of 1954, or since 1965. Historically speaking, the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi has been expanding its outside base areas steadily and successfully for over 20 years, except in South Vietnam.

Now, North Vietnam and her allies dominate the whole inside core of Indochina from the China border to the reaches of Phnompenh and Saigon. It is mountainous, remote, and unsettled. The expanded core gives Indochina a U-shaped look, with the nationalists controlling the thin outside and the Communists holding the much more extensive inside. But this interior highland core is not the real Laos, Cambodia or South Vietnam, from the standpoint of the security of Thailand and the stability of Southeast Asia. The politically and economically significant part of Indochina, except for the Tonkin plain around Hanoi, lies in the Mekong River valley of Laos, the Phnompenh plain, and the delta of South Vietnam. This is where there are people, resources and power. The addition of the people, communications, and resources of eastern Thailand to this tri-national heartland of the Mekong counties would make an inverted T-shaped axis of sorts,

<sup>3</sup> Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, Press Release 37, July 14, 1970.

stretching along a rolling alluvial plain from Bangkok to Saigon and jutting northward through the Mekong Valley to Vientiane and Luang Prabang in Laos.

North Vietnam's control of the Indochina core, however, has now severed that axis in southern Laos and northern Cambodia. Vietnamese Communists may even sever much of it in Cambodia between the frontiers. Dominance of this core and rupture of the inverted T-shaped nationalist axis are distinctly important gains for North Vietnam in her struggle for power in Indochina and her relationship to Thailand. It is therefore as idle to expect that North Vietnam will voluntarily give up this key base area as it is unrealistic to assume that there is any military force anywhere available which is willing and able to rid Indochina's core of North Vietnam's power there. This is a fact of life for Thailand and for all Southeast Asia.

### A COMMUNIST CONFEDERATION

This enlarged interior power base has made it possible for North Vietnam to establish the formerly embryonic political front of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Communist groups, some 40 years after Ho Chi Minh and his colleagues launched the *Indochinese Communist party* to overthrow "imperialism, feudalism and reaction" in Vietnam and to win total independence for all Indochina. A "Summit Conference of Indo Chinese Peoples" took place in south China in April, 1970, attended by Prince Norodom Sihanouk of the Cambodian government in exile, Prince Souphanouvong of the Pathet Lao, Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, and Pham Van Dong, the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Hanoi). They apparently agreed to coordinate their future military operations; affirmed the solidarity of their aims of developing "fraternal friendship" and applying the Five Principles of Coexistence; confirmed the diversity of

their origins, experiences and goals; and endorsed the "neutralist" principles of the Geneva Agreements and the platforms of Prince Sihanouk, the Pathet Lao, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (P.R.G.).<sup>4</sup> Sihanouk, who played a prominent role in that conference, has written that an "Axis," or "common anti-imperialist front," of the "revolutionary peoples" of Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, China and North Korea was formed "in the face of the pro-United States Pnompenh-Saigon-Bangkok-Vientiane Axis."<sup>5</sup>

The tri-national base area is providing territory, logistics and some population for the Pathet Lao, Khmer Rouge and Vietcong so that they can establish "liberated" zones and governments and coordinate their efforts against their enemies. This "Federation of Indochinese Peoples" under Hanoi's sponsorship and Chinese tutelage is in the process of crystallization. If this political consolidation and joint military direction succeed, the federation will someday face Thailand along 1,000 miles of the eastern frontier.

Already the Cambodian conflict has intensified Thailand's historic power confrontation with North Vietnam or the "Tonkinese" in Southeast Asia. No effective buffer is left. The local balance of power now involves Thailand much more directly than at any time since 1945 or since France subjugated Indochina. This power balance depends on the relative force, cohesion and stability of the ongoing relationship among Vientiane, Bangkok, Pnompenh and Saigon, on one hand, and Hanoi, the Pathet Lao, the Khmer Rouge with the Sihanoukists, and the Vietcong, on the other.

The two "camps" may fight it out to victory or to stalemate, dependent on support from the outside big powers. A protracted struggle is likely. Or the big powers may find it in their respective interests to use their influence to bring the two groupings to negotiate cease-fires and political settlements in updated but different Geneva Agreements. These would have to provide for pledges of non-interference and mutual guarantees from the big powers. Or, it has even been hinted,

<sup>4</sup> Jean Lacouture, "From the Vietnam War to an Indo China War," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1970, p. 627.

<sup>5</sup> Prince Norodom Sihanouk, "The Future of Cambodia," *Foreign Affairs*, October, 1970, p. 5.

some sort of unwritten accommodation concerning western Cambodia and Laos might emerge between Bangkok and Hanoi—unlikely as that seems—to limit the extent of their military interventions toward each other in this sensitive area.<sup>6</sup> With regard to the notion of some tacit understanding, a North Vietnamese Red Cross team visited Bangkok in the summer of 1970 to discuss the repatriation of some 40,000 Vietnamese—and perhaps probe other matters. At all events, for Thailand, the survival or fall of a neutral non-Communist government in Cambodia would be the key to the outcome of the confrontation between the two groupings in Southeast Asia.

Recognizing the implications of these developments in Cambodia, during the spring, summer, and fall of 1970 Thailand sought international and bilateral solutions to the problem of whether and how to intervene to protect Thai security and help Cambodia. During the first few months, when the prospects in Cambodia looked grim to officials in Phnompenh and Bangkok, the Thai faced a difficult problem of whether to send Thai ground forces into Cambodia. The United States government apparently favored and encouraged some such action. For weeks the decision seemed on and then off. It provoked considerable policy debate within the Thai government, some said, probably exaggeratedly, even a serious split and the possibility of a coup. Military spokesmen appeared to favor direct intervention into Cambodia. Civilian leaders and some sectors of public opinion favored a more cautious response. In July, an interesting and unprecedented debate between Deputy Prime Minister Prapas, head of the army and the police, Foreign Minister Thanat, and Kukrit Pramoj, influential editor and publisher of *Siam Rath*, a much respected newspaper, took place before some 3,000 students at Chulalongkorn University. General Prapas favored military intervention if necessary, while Thanat urged collective diplomatic efforts to help Cambodia.

The Cabinet debate and public discussion resulted in a resolution not to deploy Thai ground units to Cambodia but to depend on diplomatic channels and bilateral assistance to help Cambodia and to protect Thai security interests.

Several reasons, apparently, explain this policy. The United States had decided not to stay in Cambodia, not to help finance Thai forces in Cambodia, and not to keep United States troops in South Vietnam. International endorsement of Thai military involvement in Cambodia failed to materialize. Cambodian confidence and self-reliance, moreover, seemed to have generated an indigenous Cambodian national resistance and stamina, at least for a short while. Thai intervention, even at Cambodian invitation, might thus have left Thailand alone and unsupported to face the possible reactions of North Vietnam and the People's Republic of China.

Despite the appearance of blowing hot and cold on the issue of Thai troops for Cambodia, Thai officials actually handled the problem in a deliberate, measured manner.

Initiated by Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik with Thanat Khoman's active support, and held in mid-May, 1970, the Jakarta Conference of Foreign Ministers, representing 11 Asian and Pacific governments, did not endorse military intervention in Cambodia or military assistance for her beleaguered government. United States military operations in Cambodia had undoubtedly and unfortunately complicated the original conception of the conference. Even so, there were indications that Thailand had wanted a positive response to demonstrate the validity of Asian solidarity in a common cause. Thanat Khoman, elected spokesman of the conference, proposed that the conference form a team of observers to investigate and report on the situation and set up a continuing body to ensure continuity and submit recommendations to the governments at the conference.

The conference, however, did not do so. It said nothing about aid from Asian and Pacific countries. It called for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Cambodia,

<sup>6</sup> Bangkok Post, August 7, 1970

which was meant to include United States forces and, it could be inferred, to prevent the introduction of any other, including Thai forces, into Cambodia. The conference concluded in a low key by calling for the reestablishment of international machinery to help preserve Cambodia's neutrality and for the convening of an international conference, including the participants at the Geneva conference of 1954 and other interested parties. The conference also asked the foreign ministers of Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia to follow up on these recommendations with the British and Soviet Co-chairmen of the Geneva Conferences, the Secretary General of the United Nations, and the U.N. Security Council.<sup>7</sup>

After several months, none of the conference's proposals had succeeded. The three-nation team of foreign ministers had not been able to make immediate headway. Nonetheless, while unable to stop the war in Cambodia, the conference may have set a useful precedent which eventually may help bring a compromise peace to Southeast Asia.

Thai officials also looked for some kind of new regional relationships among the four Mekong countries, although the extent of their diplomatic approach remains obscure and controversial. In a speech in Bangkok on June 25, 1970, Thanat Khoman remarked that "the necessity for a natural coalition between those endangered by new imperialistic expansions may lead to new forms of cooperation in the Southeast Asian peninsula."

In early June, a Vietcong spokesman in

<sup>7</sup> See the report of the conference issued by the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs which contains the texts of statements and the communiqué.

<sup>8</sup> Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Press Release, No. 40, July 27, 1970.

<sup>9</sup> South Vietnam has a regular army of nearly half a million, local forces of 1,500,000, a large coastal and river patrol force, and a growing modern air force. Thailand herself has about 150,000 in the armed forces including about 90,000 in the Army, a large reservoir of demobilized draftees and over 10,000 returnees from combat duty with the Black Panther Division in South Vietnam. Cambodia has rapidly expanded her forces from 35,000 to well over 100,000. The United States has spent a great deal of effort and money in training and equipping these forces during much of the past twenty years. Whether that was properly conceived or well expended remains to be proven.

Paris was reported to have accused the Americans of creating a "Bangkok-Pnompenh-Saigon-Vientiane axis." On July 22, the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially denied that a new military alliance was being established.<sup>8</sup> The statement also noted that an alliance did not make sense in view of the fact that it would involve parties with only low or non-existent military potential and capability.<sup>9</sup>

Continuing contacts between Thailand and Cambodia have indeed developed, while considerable coordination among the four governments has taken place indirectly. However, Bangkok's prudent disinclination to intervene or to become too deeply involved in Cambodia appeared to some American journalists to cause considerable impatience and resentment in Saigon and Pnompenh.

The Cambodian impact was also felt at the annual meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, held in Manila July 2-3, 1970. Thanat Khoman, noting that "SEATO is now witnessing the third crisis emerging in Cambodia" after Laos and Vietnam, and that it would be under "close scrutiny" in the region, pointedly asked the "pertinent question" of "whether we came here at this time to give it a new lease of life or to preside over its liquidation." In a series of generalities, the Council communiqué endorsed Cambodia's neutrality and applauded efforts to bring about a diplomatic solution, but apparently took no steps to further collective support or to provide military aid for Pnompenh. Thailand's lack of great enthusiasm for SEATO was later recorded. Besides SEATO, Thailand has emphasized that the big powers hold the key to peace in Southeast Asia. Accordingly, Thanat Khoman proposed at the General Assembly that they should take a new initiative for a peaceful settlement, but

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*"The political future of the two Vietnams is contingent on too many possible developments to warrant much speculation. To the north lies a totalitarian state. . . . To the south lies a state that must still be termed a dictatorship. . . ." This author discusses the problems of both Vietnams.*

## Political Processes in the Two Vietnams

BY CHARLES A. JOINER

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**I**N RECENT YEARS, numerous socio-economic-political developments have affected the political systems of the two Vietnams. One element that will have an important impact on Vietnam south of the 17th parallel is that the decade of the 1960's inaugurated a decided shift toward the ascendancy of southerners. This trend was far from universal, and typically favored persons from the center as opposed to the Mekong Delta, but it was an omen of vast significance for future political processes in South Vietnam.

Some 16 years after the Geneva agreement, the Tonkinese-Annamese-Cochinchinese trichotomy had lessened, although old animosities had not been forgotten. What made the increased role of non-Tonkinese particularly relevant was that for one important interest group—the entire network of Communist parallel hierarchies—the ascendancy of southerners was not the norm.

Thus the Vietcong, the National Liberation Front (N.L.F.), the People's Revolutionary party, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government entered the new decade primarily as alien forces within what was

for them by this time a truly foreign land.

In the Communist structure, northerners were serving in nearly all roles. Militarily, the revolutionary forces had suffered extreme losses in personnel, in highly qualified and well trained leadership cadres, in volume of supplies and materials. Most importantly, however, they had lost in two areas: (1) in the number of villagers compelled to offer allegiance and (2) in the number and general dispersal of military and commissariat cadres who were born in the south.

In the absence of a strong, expanding base of southern adherents, the Tonkinese\* maintained only the bare pretext of a southern civil war. More than a decade and a half after the formal termination of the French Indochina War, the nature of the Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam interrelationship in the total political-military struggle became evident. Actually, for the leadership and political elites of the four nations of Indochina there had never been any question of the struggle's regional aspects. For the four-nation complex, future inter-nation conflict was always simply a matter of timing. Neither Phnompenh nor Vientiane were ever under any illusions as to the ambitions of any of the Vietnamese.

North Vietnam's incursions into Laos had been continual. Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk had shrewdly opted for clandestine cooperation with Hanoi in an attempt to side with and to temporize with the group

\* Note: Strictly speaking North Vietnam today consists of Tonkin (including the northern highlands) and part of Annam north of the 17th parallel. But "Tonkinese" is often used by Vietnamese in the south to refer to non-highlander residents of the D.R.V.N.

he correctly perceived as the strongest representative of twentieth century Vietnamese imperialism. The result was a loss of power, the acceptance of a puppet role in a Tonkinese political-military front within his own nation, and reliance upon the Chinese, the force he feared most.

Not unexpectedly, the temporary restraints placed upon North Vietnam's colonialism during a period of setbacks were also to a certain extent offset in Cambodian eyes by a less than subtle inference from Saigon that Cambodia was now a part of South Vietnam's zone of influence. The A.R.V.N. (South Vietnam's army) expeditionary actions in Cambodia represented several changes in the previous balance of power. For South Vietnam, they were representative of her position in the future scheme of things. Her army behaved professionally; vis-a-vis the Cambodian military it was obviously a strong force in its own right even in the absence of the Americans; and it was manifestly an unquestioned force in Indochinese politics.

And, luckily there was a quick halt to anti-Vietnamese actions taken by Cambodians under the pretext of eliminating Vietcong influence. Some 400,000 Vietnamese had resided in Cambodia; of these, official counts tallied over 140,000 who evacuated because of massacres and general instability.<sup>1</sup>

### THE "PRESENCE" OF SOUTH VIETNAM

The most significant political development in South Vietnam was the existence of a G.V.N. (Republic of Vietnam) presence throughout most of the country. This dramatic shift from the mid-1960's held considerable political significance. The decline of the Vietcong allowed the Saigon government to move into many more villages than was previously possible. According to allied sources, in mid-1970 in excess of 92 per cent of the population of South Vietnam was living in areas not under N.L.F. control and, following the allied military expedition into Cambodia and the evacuation of P.A.V.N. (North Vietnam) forces, there were no vil-

lages in Corps III under Vietcong control. Official statistics also claimed that 8 out of every 10 persons lived in hamlets rated relatively safe as opposed to 3 out of 10 in 1968 and that the N.L.F. controlled only 6.5 per cent of the hamlets compared to its control of 40 per cent in 1968. (However, P.A.V.N. strength in the demilitarized zone region and its potential in Corps I continued to be considerable, particularly after Attopea and Saravan in Laos were taken by P.A.V.N. forces during April-June, 1970.) Revolutionary development was relatively more effective. Areas of communal control, such as the areas where the Hoa Hao were dominant, had long since ended their rather formal agreements with the N.L.F. and at least tolerated the G.V.N. at a distance.

By 1970, most Vietnamese who opposed the N.L.F. admittedly were surprised by the Saigon government's widespread presence and its control of village life. This surprise, however, was coupled with the continued disdain of most Vietnamese of all classes for the regime per se.

In general, the Vietnamese are unmoved by official pretenses. They are a population ruled but rarely governed. They put up with the French as a set of rulers, but did not regard them as representing an entity to which loyalty was required. They disdained the Diem regime, the only vestige of stability since World War II, largely because that regime rested upon an artificiality (certainly a generally recognized Asian artifact) in which a single family attempted the impossible feat of restoring the aura of the past court of Hue. They survived the utter chaos of the post-Diem years and the utter devastation of a seemingly never-ending war. Thus the Vietnamese could hardly be expected to be optimistic about the Thieu government.

There is a paradox in Nguyen Van Thieu's failure to become an accepted national leader. Despite his military background, he has displayed an excellent sense of what is and what is not politic. In a dangerously divisive political milieu, he has attained the closest approximation of executive control since the fall of Ngo Dinh Diem. This he has

<sup>1</sup> *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, July 27, 1970.

achieved in the face of an independent national power base behind Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky that can claim allegiances within Thieu's principal source of support, i.e., the military. In addition, the national legislature and the courts are much more independent than they were during the Diem period. And Thieu has been faced with a United States foreign policy increasingly at variance with his domestic politics. Yet he has consolidated his own position steadily, placing those considered more loyal to him (and incidentally generally more competent) in provincial and military leadership roles, coping one by one with religious, student and other interest groups by supporting rival organizations and by striking vigorously at the right moments against more militant elements of his opposition, and by utilizing the historic Vietnamese political tool of creating temporary support groups (without strength enough to become true rivals) for specific objectives.

Also, increased democratization has been a continued characteristic of the Thieu era. In spite of the continuation of certain government actions abhorrent by Western standards of civil liberties, it is fair to state that since Thieu's rise to power the Saigon regime has gradually moved toward a society more open than ever before in Vietnam, certainly much more open than that of North Vietnam. To many, no doubt to most, Vietnamese, such reforms are too little and too late. None have been the object of an overall articulated policy, but rather have taken place because of pressures from the Americans, from legislative leaders, from the courts, and so forth.

### **STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION**

One source of pressure for reform is structural change. Today, villages are electing their own officials. During 1970 there were elections for 1,118 village council members and 4,462 hamlet chiefs and deputy chiefs. About 94 per cent of 2,151 villages had elected officials, and 96.8 per cent of 10,522 hamlets had elected officials. Civil servants continue to be appointed to perform provincial and district functions; following the French system, they are assigned from min-

istries or special offices. Still, provincial council elections have made this basically artificial tier a more visible government. Of 6,113,286 eligible voters in provincial and municipal council elections, 75.9 per cent voted in 1970 for 1,930 candidates for 554 provincial and 6 autonomous city level council positions. In Saigon, 350,000 voted, or 65 per cent of those registered. Such dry statistics naturally tend to be misleading. Yet these elections are important: (1) they bring the population into the political process, and (2) they place non-military political personalities in positions of responsibility. Election of province chiefs will complete this phase of structural transformation.

The second pressure for reform has been the development of national government structures independent of the executive. While this constitutional change in the political system has hardly produced a pure separation of powers and checks and balances, it has brought about noticeable changes. The elected legislature is the most independent and most representative legislature in the history of Vietnam. The National Assembly of South Vietnam has given the population a new experience in democratic politics. Elections have provided forums for candidates to criticize not only each other but the government itself. Turnout has been high. Non-government candidates for the House and slates for the Senate have been elected. In fact, in 1970, an anti-government militant An Quang Buddhist slate headed by a national hero who publicly broke with Diem at the height of the 1963 Buddhist crisis received the highest plurality in the election to the Senate.

Such elections have not been free of interference by officials. Nonetheless, fairly rigid electoral supervision by specific commissions and other bodies has kept these elections straightforward mechanisms for leadership selection by Southeast Asian standards. Political parties, institutions that have had an extremely checkered history in Vietnam, have had an opportunity to operate openly. Almost all major religious, ethnic and non-Communist interest groups have participated in

electoral processes and have obtained representation in the National Assembly. In fact, the legislature manifests the divisions within Vietnamese society, a situation not without its problems.

To a great extent, the legislature operates through the process of shifting alignments; majorities are formed on the basis of issues and politics. Increasingly, legislators, and particularly House members, have become oriented to the role of serving as friends in court for their district constituents.

And both houses have displayed a considerable independence of the executive. For instance, government-sponsored legislation concerning anti-inflationary measures, increased executive decree powers, land reform, and budgets has met with serious criticism on the floor of each house, and certain propositions have been turned down. The legislature has also served a watchdog function, criticizing specific alleged government malfeasances and specific official personalities. Perhaps most important, the legislative institution has steadfastly demanded that its constitutional powers be respected and that it retain an autonomous position vis-a-vis the executive power.

During 1969-1970, this question was dramatically brought to the foreground by Thieu's attempt to put the legislature in its place. He succeeded only in having one member arrested—for alleged pro-Communist activities. He was Tran Ngoc Chau, a man with a brilliant record as a province chief and as director of revolutionary development.<sup>2</sup>

The Chau case and a government-approved spontaneous demonstration against the House hardened the determination of many legislators to retain their independence and to protect the standard constitutional rights of legislatures against political harassment by the government.

It was in the Chau case, further, that the Supreme Court staked out a thoroughly non-Confucianist role as an independent judiciary.

<sup>2</sup> For a provocative analysis see "The Chau Trial," I and II (March, 1970 and April/July, 1970) by Elizabeth Pond, published by the Alicia Patterson Fund.

In declaring the military court trial of Chau to have been illegal, it simultaneously declared the independence of the legislative and judicial structures. It also declared Thieu's austerity tax unconstitutional, forcing him to try an equalization tax as a substitute anti-inflation measure, and ruled the special military field tribunals unconstitutional. The Supreme Court was not by any definition a serious block to executive misuse of power, nor did its members advance such pretenses. But this transplanted American-style institution provided an avenue of redress in the face of governmental transgressions against the Constitution. This was not a nicety of law for appearance's sake. Thieu was forced to devise alternative anti-inflationary measures. As Chau could testify, the subtleties of a Supreme Court declaration did not guarantee his release from prison, but his case resulted in the supremacy of the civil over the military judiciary.

Thus, while South Vietnam retains a unitary, strong executive, for the first time the executive is not absolutely supreme. Despite numerous qualifications, South Vietnam has become increasingly decentralized, and this decentralization has provided avenues of access to the total political system for a wide range of interest groups. This is potentially of vast significance for the political future of South Vietnam. While specific interest groups have been given less than a fair opportunity to move into positions of controlling administration in certain areas where they have considerable adherents vis-a-vis other groups—i.e., Buddhists, tribesmen, Khmers—because of prejudicial decisions by provincial and other G.V.N. officials, the advances that have been made by the major interests in local government will be zealously guarded. Eventual popular election of province chiefs and an expanded role for provincial councils will provide a number of political parties with a solid base.

#### POLITICAL PARTIES

Despite their electoral experience to date and their roles in the national legislature and local councils, political parties are far from

viable.<sup>3</sup> The old-line nationalist parties, especially the V.N.Q.D.D. (Kuomintang) and the Dai Viet, have gained electoral victories, but they continue to be divided into numerous factions. Parties primarily representing Catholic and Buddhist interests have had success at the polls. Splinter parties, like the Tan Dai Viet and the revitalized Diemist Can Lao party, have added to the vitality of the party system. But even the Can Lao has divided into central and southern factions.

In fact, government-sponsored parties or associations have added little in long-range terms. No generalization could possibly portray these groups as obvious leaders for the future. In a word, all of Vietnam, indeed all of Indochina, has seen only one truly successful political party, i.e., the Communist party, under any of the names it has used in the twentieth century. It has never won a free election, except a quasi-open election before World War II in Cochinchina. It has relatively few members today even in the D.R.V.N.. A vanguard, not a mass structure, the key to its success lies in its ability to organize, coordinate, indoctrinate and control people through the creation of overlapping structures within a closely restrained hierarchy. It has also enjoyed a bit of luck and good timing.

The parties in the south today have had a long history of bad luck, terrible timing for their crucial moves, and an absence of real leadership (due largely to the physical annihilation of that leadership by the French, the Communists and the Diemists). But their major problem has been organizational. Diem tried to create a nation-wide party, although it was divided between his brothers, but he created a paper structure whose residual strength is only now beginning to be appreciated. The possibility that the state would create an all-encompassing party failed to materialize following the coup against Diem. For one thing, the military did not seek to create a viable competing structure,

and the national leaders were blocked by their jealous and ever suspicious military peers. This was an objective condition: a powerful institution whose support was requisite for any regime's survival was not prepared to acquiesce while any national leader or group created an alternative institution. To an extent, of course, Thieu did just this, indirectly, by accepting structural differentiation and directly, by personnel replacements. But this was not the substitution of an institution like the Lao Dong or Can Lao. Rather, it was a diffraction that created multiple centers of control, not cohesive, interconnected elements of a national institution.

The reasons for political party amorphousness in South Vietnam are subjective. In a real sense, South Vietnam is a complex matrix of interest groups; politics historically has been carried on through communalism, responsive to religious, ethnic and geographical interests. The instruments of a broader political system have been accepted as at best a disturbing alien intrusion in their affairs. Interest group leaders are finally gaining a stake in the system through councils and the legislature and through special arrangements like those for the tribesmen, but this experience has been of too recent a vintage to allow their constituents to accept the legislature as the sole initiator of national values, which must often be interpreted locally. Many other groups, primarily urban groups such as the university students and the squatters (veterans and refugees), but also groups such as the An Quang Buddhists, have continued to feel unrepresented—and to be oppressed by the regime—thus standing outside the regular political system.

#### PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Even in the absence of viable political parties, there are several topics that are recognized as major public policy issues by practically all residents of South Vietnam.

The overriding question is the future role of the United States, not only because of military security but because of economic and other public policy questions. So-called Vietnamization has far reaching significance.

<sup>3</sup> An excellent catalogue and critique of recent developments in South Vietnam's political party system is given by Allan Goodman in "South Vietnam: Neither War nor Peace," *Asian Survey*, February, 1970, pp. 107-132.

From a high of 542,500 United States troops in Vietnam during February, 1969, the number dropped to well below 400,000 by the end of 1970 and was scheduled to drop to 260,000 by the spring of 1971 under the Vietnamization program. Presumably United States withdrawal does not mean that overnight there will no longer be an American presence. Support groups, training contingents and supplies will probably continue in some form and in some magnitude. However, ironically, most Vietnamese are extremely uneasy about de-Americanization despite their undoubtedly desire to have Vietnamese governing Vietnam without a force that has long since outlived whatever welcome it once enjoyed. What most Vietnamese fear is not the absence of Americans but the withdrawal of their economic input into the social system: jobs (nearly 150,000 persons were employed by American companies and agencies in 1970), construction, piastre support, import assistance, and so on. Despite the severe economic upheaval associated with United States investments in widespread activities related to the war effort, Vietnamese prosperity (as well as inflation) is tied to those investments.

In fact, the entire Vietnamese economic system, especially the increasingly important urban economies, depends on the United States to provide a continuing support level as the base for Vietnamese economics. Without that support, unemployment and inflation would be rampant, something neither the Thieu regime nor any conceivable nationalist government could survive. The war has made South Vietnam a nation of urban dwellers: over 60 per cent of the population lives in genuine urban areas but even many "villages" today are urban areas by almost any standard definition. Such a population cannot survive on a subsistence economy but must rely upon a sophisticated economic system.

## INFLATION

Criticisms of Thieu already hinge on the topic of inflation. It is difficult to have a conversation with a Vietnamese without im-

mediately hearing about the price of rice, of rent, of charcoal, of Hondas, including detailed comparisons of price rises and the fact that many Vietnamese must hold two jobs to make ends meet. There was an annual price rise of 30 per cent during 1967-1969. Prices rose 50 per cent in the 12-month period before a change in rates from 118 to 275 piastres per dollar for American personnel, for luxury item importers, and for exporters in South Vietnam was approved in October, 1970. The rate change was to counteract a thriving black market and to stabilize the economy. Increased prices on luxury items, increased interest rates—both encouraging savings—also served as anti-inflation measures. Presumably, an extremely unbalanced budget would also be brought more nearly into balance.

Corruption—the second topic for an unsolicited recitation—is condemned but rationalized for junior level officials as an inevitable adjunct to their activities if they are to live normal lives under inflationary conditions. A late 1970 pay increase of 20 per cent for civil servants and soldiers, the groups hardest hit by inflation, was unlikely to resolve the corruption problem.

Other economic and social problems also plagued South Vietnam's government. Although the refugee problem had diminished greatly, well over three million persons had lost their homes since the intensification of the war in 1965. The nation had over 200,000 orphans. Many veterans were forced to live a substandard existence in urban ghettos. General urban problems were acute: slums, sanitation, welfare, education, fire fighting, traffic circulation, robbery and other crimes.

*(Continued on page 366)*

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Charles A. Joiner has been a consultant to the National Institute of Administration in Saigon and to the Lebanese Civil Service Commission and the Lebanese University in Beirut. Among his publications are *Public Administration in the Saigon Metropolitan Area* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of State, 1964), and numerous articles on administration and politics in Southeast Asia.

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## CURRENT DOCUMENTS

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# President Nixon's Proposal for Indochina Peace

*On October 8, 1970, in a nationally televised address, President Richard Nixon outlined what he termed "a major new initiative for peace" in Indochina. The text of his five specific proposals follows:*

• • •

First, I propose that all armed forces throughout Indochina cease firing their weapons and remain in the positions they now hold. This would be a cease-fire in place. It would not in itself be an end to the conflict, but it would accomplish one goal all of us have been working toward: an end to the killing.

I do not minimize the difficulty of maintaining a cease-fire in a guerrilla war where there are no front lines. But an unconventional war may require an unconventional truce: our side is ready to stand still and cease firing.

I ask that this proposal for a cease-fire in place be the subject for immediate negotiation. And my hope is that it will break the logjam in all the negotiations.

This cease-fire proposal is put forth without pre-conditions. The general principles that should apply are these:

¶ A cease-fire must be effectively supervised by international observers, as well as by the parties themselves. Without effective supervision, a cease-fire runs the constant risk of breaking down. All concerned must be confident that the cease-fire will be maintained and that any local breaches of it will be quickly and fairly repaired.

¶ A cease-fire should not be the means by which either side builds up its strength by an increase in outside combat forces in any of the nations of Indochina, and a cease-fire should cause all kinds of warfare to stop. This covers the full range of actions that have typified this war, including bombing and acts of terror.

¶ A cease-fire should encompass not only the fighting in Vietnam but in all of Indochina. Conflicts in this region are closely related. The United States has never sought to widen the war. What we do seek is to widen the peace.

¶ Finally, a cease-fire should be part of a general move to end the war in Indochina.

A cease-fire in place would undoubtedly create a host of problems in its maintenance. But it has always been easier to make war than to make a truce.

To build an honorable peace, we must accept the challenge of long and difficult negotiations.

By agreeing to stop the shooting we can set the stage for agreements on other matters.

A second point of the new initiative for peace is this: I propose an Indochina peace conference. At the Paris talks today we are talking about Vietnam. But North Vietnamese troops are not only infiltrating, crossing borders and establishing bases in South Vietnam; they are carrying on their aggression in Laos and Cambodia as well.

An international conference is needed to deal with the conflict in all three states of Indochina. The war in Indochina has been proved to be of one piece. It cannot be cured by treating only one of its areas of outbreak.

The essential elements of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962 remain valid as a basis for settlement of problems between states in the Indochina area. And we shall accept the results of agreements reached between these states.

While we pursue the convening of an Indochina peace conference, we will continue the negotiations in Paris. Our proposal for a larger conference can be discussed there, as well as through other diplomatic channels.

The Paris talks will remain our primary forum for reaching a negotiated settlement until such time as a broader international conference produces serious negotiations.

The third part of our peace initiative has to do with the United States forces in South Vietnam.

In the past 20 months, I have reduced our troop ceilings in South Vietnam by 165,000 men. During the spring of next year these withdrawals will total more than 260,000 men—about one-half the number there were in South Vietnam when I took office.

As the American combat role and presence have decreased, American casualties have also decreased. Our casualties since the completion of the Cambodian operation were the lowest for a comparable

*(Continued on page 365)*

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### ON SOUTHEAST ASIA

**GENERAL GIAP: POLITICIAN AND STRATEGIST.** BY ROBERT J. O'NEILL. (New York: Praeger, 1969. 219 pages, note on sources, chronology, index, \$6.95.)

General Vo Nguyen Giap, North Vietnam's Defense Minister and military ideologist and one of the outstanding Communist leaders in Asia, has demonstrated his professional competence by organizing the Vietnamese peasants into various guerrilla movements both within and outside the Vietnamese Communist party. In addition, he has had considerable experience in dealing with foreign governments. Giap's belief in total solutions, irrespective of circumstances, have made him a controversial figure in his own government. This book discusses a few of his actions and thoughts, unfortunately without treating in any depth the society that produced him.

René Peritz  
Indiana State University

**THE ROAD FROM WAR: VIETNAM 1965-1970.** BY ROBERT SHAPLEN. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970. 368 pages, introduction, postscripts and index, \$7.95.)

A collection of the articles written over a five year period by the Asian correspondent for *The New Yorker*, this lively book presents the author's picture of our involvement in Vietnam. He describes the personalities of many Indochinese leaders and discusses how we can disengage ourselves from the conflict, adding the gloomy prediction that we shall find ourselves in other Vietnam-like situations in Asia and in other parts of the world.

O.E.S.

**BANNER OF PEOPLE'S WAR, THE PARTY'S MILITARY LINE.** BY GEN-

ERAL VO NGUYEN GIAP. (New York: Praeger, 1970. 118 pages, preface, introduction and appendix \$5.50.)

General Giap, North Vietnam's Defense Minister and army chief, expounds his theories about waging the type of war now facing us in Vietnam. He draws on the history of Indochina as well as his own experiences. This is a book worth reading in an attempt to understand the military theories that guide the North Vietnam war effort.

O.E.S.

**THE WAR OF THE INNOCENTS.** BY CHARLES BRACELEN FLOOD. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970. 480 pages, \$7.95.)

The author describes the war in Vietnam in a series of vignettes about the people involved. His information is detailed, and his descriptive method makes for a book not likely to be outdated soon.

O.E.S.

**THE COMMUNIST REVOLUTION IN ASIA.** 2nd edition. EDITED BY ROBERT A. SCALAPINO. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969. 416 pages and index. Selected bibliography follows each chapter. Paper, \$4.95.)

The second edition of this informative collection of essays is essentially an updating of the first. The list of authors, except for one newcomer, remains the same; it includes some of our most able observers of the Asian scene.

New material in this edition is concerned primarily with recent problems, particularly the dilemma posed for each local party by the Sino-Soviet dispute. Overall, the book should be useful both to informed laymen and to scholars in the field.

John T. Everett, Jr.  
State University College  
Fredonia, New York

*(Continued on page 368)*

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## LAOS IN THE SECOND INDOCHINA WAR

*(Continued from page 332)*

States military action in Indochina is increasingly being evaluated in terms of whether or not such action is essential to the security of American troops in South Vietnam as they engage in the delicate process of turning over responsibility for combat to the South Vietnamese. In that sense, the bombing and other interdictory actions by the United States along the trail is of vital importance, whereas the war in northern Laos is less so.

Likewise, as North Vietnam finds herself increasingly hard pressed for manpower, the war in northern Laos ties down good troops that could more profitably be employed elsewhere in Indochina. Thus the possibility has been created of some sort of partial disengagement by both sides in northern Laos. This may be the opportunity for which Prince Souphanouvong has been waiting.

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## CHANGING CAMBODIA

*(Continued from page 338)*

Cambodia is not in charge of her destiny—no small nation hemmed in by traditional enemies ever is—but the government's eagerness to deal with its neighbors and its people on a rational basis, in terms of shared responsibilities and concerns, constitutes a significant departure from the past. Similarly, the Lon Nol government's confidence that it can arm the people and retain their loyalty is revolutionary, in Cambodian terms. The war may go further than any of Sihanouk's programs to establish Cambodia's identity, although the costs of doing so will probably be high.

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## BURMA: THE OBSCURE DOMINO

*(Continued from page 344)*

she seems removed from the complicated international rivalries of present-day mainland Southeast Asia. She borders five of

Asia's most important and/or troubled countries: China, India, Pakistan, Thailand and Laos, but she also appears isolated in her location at the top of the Bay of Bengal away from the major sea routes to the Pacific Ocean.

Compared to Vietnam (let alone to the far less significant countries of Cambodia and Laos), Burma may be more important to several big, or medium, powers. Burma is a back door to—and from—China, a fact which must be important in Peking's eyes in light of the Sino-Soviet dispute, the continuing (if declining) United States presence in East and Southeast Asia, and the reviving great-power status of Japan. She is India's—and Pakistan's—buffer against spreading or future mainland Southeast Asian wars. And she is the only frontier on which Thailand is not threatened today (although some observers in Bangkok see their nation threatened in this direction, too).

Vietnam's importance was much emphasized in the United States, especially during the administration of President Lyndon Johnson, but Burma would seem to be more important to more states than Vietnam. She is both bigger and richer in natural resources; some would even say that she is more strategically situated. But today Burma is not only a political backwater but also a curiously and chronically divided land that is retrogressing economically while striving to remain aloof from the major foreign policy problems of her own part of the world.

How long can these anomalies continue? Probably not much longer—no matter how long General Ne Win continues to rule the country or what happens to U Nu and his alliance of democratic and ethnic minority politicians. Burma is too important a country to remain so irrelevant a factor in emerging post-colonial Asia. She may not remain the obscure domino much longer. She may yet be drawn into larger Indochina power rivalries, or she may provide the next of Southeast Asia's probably continuing crises. In any event, Burma cannot be hidden—despite the efforts of her leadership to limit her visibility and impact.

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## MALAYSIA

(Continued from page 350)

American policy that it went virtually unreported in the West.

If, however, self-reliance is being forced on Prime Minister Razak, there is no doubt that he sees its domestic advantages. At the level of symbol-wielding and ideology formation, self-reliance is good for the national ego; it may even make the Department of National Unity's task a little easier. Now the British can be blamed more openly for having brought the Chinese to Malaya in the first place. And all Western powers can be chided for failing to see that what they view as the "repression" of minorities is actually an effort, fully constitutional, to redress the economic imbalance and help the Malays to secure their fair share of the nation's wealth.<sup>11</sup> At the level of military preparedness, the same build-up which is necessitated by a self-reliant foreign policy is useful in keeping order at home. The extent to which Razak relies

<sup>11</sup> Malaysian politicians have been especially critical of Western journalists' insensitivity to the guarantee of "the special position of the Malays" in the constitution. A widely-circulated "secret" paper written by a Malay intellectual in mid-1970 "exposed" the United States, Great Britain and other imperialist powers as friends of the Chinese, and enemies of the Malays. This is a fashionable position among the so-called "ultras," right-wing Malay nationalists.

on and controls the armed forces and the extent to which keeping order means maintaining the status quo are questions vital to Malaysia's political future.

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## PRESIDENT NIXON'S PROPOSAL

(Continued from page 362)

period in the last four and a half years.

We are ready now to negotiate an agreed timetable for complete withdrawal as part of an overall settlement. We are prepared to withdraw all our forces as part of a settlement based on the principles I spelled out previously and the proposals I am making tonight.

Fourth, I ask the other side to join us in a search for a political settlement that truly meets the aspirations of all South Vietnamese.

Three principles govern our approach:

¶ We seek a political solution that reflects the will of the South Vietnamese people.

¶ A fair political solution should reflect the existing relationship of political forces in South Vietnam.

¶ And we will abide by the outcome of the political process agreed upon.

Let there be no mistake about one essential point: the other side is not merely objecting to a few personalities in the South Vietnamese government. They want to dismantle the organized non-Communist parties and insure the takeover by their party. They demand the right to exclude whomsoever they wish from government.

This patently unreasonable demand is totally unacceptable.

(Continued on page 366)

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D. G. REDMOND, JR., Publisher

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## PRESIDENT NIXON'S PROPOSAL

*(Continued from page 365)*

As my proposals today indicate, we are prepared to be flexible on many matters. But we stand firm for the right of all the South Vietnamese people to determine for themselves the kind of government they want.

We have no intention of seeking any settlement at the conference table other than one which fairly meets the reasonable concerns of both sides. We know that when the conflict ends, the other side will still be there. And the only kind of settlement that will endure is one both sides have an interest in preserving.

Finally, I propose the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war held by both sides.

War and imprisonment should be over for all these prisoners. They and their families have already suffered too much.

I propose that all prisoners of war, without exception, without condition, be released now to return to the place of their choice.

And I propose that all journalists and other innocent civilian victims of the conflict be released immediately as well.

Immediate release of all prisoners of war would be a simple act of humanity.

But it could be even more. It could serve to establish good faith, the intent to make progress, and thus improve the prospects for negotiation.

We are prepared to discuss specific procedures to complete the speedy release of all prisoners.

The five proposals that I have made tonight can open the door to an enduring peace in Indochina.

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## THE TWO VIETNAMS

*(Continued from page 361)*

Continued government failure to eradicate poor conditions aroused considerable criticism and intensified Saigon police efforts to crack down on "hippies" involved in minor criminal activities were not adequate to alleviate the core causes.

On the other hand, the Thieu government had taken steps to resolve socio-economic problems in the rural areas. For example, rural banks were established and "miracle" rice production has been impressive. But by

far the single most important public policy for assisting rural residents has been the "Land to the Tillers" program. In brief, land holdings beyond 15 hectares were expropriated under a compensation formula and procedures were established to distribute expropriated lands (basically 3 hectares in the south and 1 hectare in the center) to present tillers (top priority) and to relatives of war dead, retired military men and civil servants, and others.<sup>4</sup> Administration of the program was made relatively simple and much of the decision-making related to this administration was left to local village officials. This long overdue public policy undoubtedly reinforced the national government presence and strengthened local government.

## POLITICS IN NORTH VIETNAM

Although many of the public policy problems encountered by the G.V.N. were not dissimilar from those faced by its northern counterpart, politically North Vietnam (the D.R.V.N.) has maintained its traditional overall balance. The Communist party dominates the branches of government and the structures for developing political support and for assisting in implementing public policies. The other primary political force, the military, has remained a source of support for party programs and for maintaining popular discipline. Unlike China, the D.R.V.N. has not retained military warlords, although a similar structure has existed in a much lesser way in the highlands. On occasion, military support has been vital, and no doubt incipient schisms have been stopped before reaching fruition.

Simplistically, the diametrically opposed ideologies of popular, continuing revolution and bourgeois-professionalization have both found periods of prominence. The controversy concerning communization or cooperative endeavors for rural areas has been the subject of heated disputes. In 1970, Le Duan and Pham Van Dong stressed the goal of increasing consumer supplies, in addition to increased food production and development of industry, communications and transportation.

<sup>4</sup> *Public Administration Bulletin* (Saigon: July 1, 1970).

North Vietnam has not enjoyed political processes in the usual sense. There have been elections, and chosen "opposition" members have been assigned victory in the uncontested referenda. Interest groups have been formed at all levels, but these are closely controlled instruments. Peasant unrest and intellectuals' criticisms have occurred but have been quickly repressed. Following ideological shifts or during periods of appeasing China or the Soviet Union, criticisms of policies and of leading personalities have been made—but in official organs. The major interest groups remain: the party, the bureaucrats and the military. The legislature ratifies; it does not initiate.

Undoubtedly, there is a Cabinet politics and a Politburo politics: all major policy shifts have been made following internal disputes at this level. But this is the politics of a closed political system, a system that survives due to the creation of a complex matrix of overlapping structures, constant indoctrination and, when necessary, military backing. In short, the D.R.V.N. is a classic totalitarian state whose overall inclination toward ideological doctrinaireism varies with the political fortunes of certain members of a small cabal.

Since the death of Ho Chi Minh, this totalitarian political system has had no national charismatic leader. Probably as President Ho had planned, Le Duan emerged as first among equals; Truong Chinh was in a decidedly secondary position for the moment; General Vo Nguyen Giap supported the war strategy shift and took at least a vocal part in advancing domestic policy shifts; Pham Van Dong remained the ever-present bureaucrat; President Ton Duc Thang continued as a respected elder; others in the cadre followed the lead of the top personalities. It was something of a Kosygin-Brezhnev (and perhaps Chou En-lai) posture: businesslike, relatively dull, with Le Duan and Dong, drawing on Giap's support, taking the lead.

In one sense, the D.R.V.N. had a more pro-Soviet regime after Ho, but economics,

combined with the Chinese proximity and complicated by the revived Indochina war theater, led the Vietnamese to adopt their standard pragmatism. China's aid to the D.R.V.N. in 1969, which was only about half that of the U.S.S.R., was greatly increased, but the U.S.S.R. also increased its aid because of the Indochina situation. Although the government was more pragmatic, it still thought it necessary to send Labor Youth League members to rural areas—they had served in urban areas already—to maintain discipline among a population considered susceptible to "counter-revolutionary" sentiments. In addition, local military task forces, acting as labor units as well as army reserves, were assigned to stimulate production in the industrial sphere, particularly in the area of handicrafts. Because of economic difficulties (a product of war efforts and inclement weather), officials were known to have turned their backs on occasion to the existence of rice and other black markets; and "cowboys" and hippies also added a new dimension to urban life.<sup>5</sup>

In effect, the post-Ho D.R.V.N. was following ambivalent domestic policies—relaxing certain controls to offset economic problems and simultaneously moving cadres to reestablish or invigorate other controls. In the seventh decade of the twentieth century, public policy in the D.R.V.N. was in a state of flux. The turn it would take was contingent upon cabal politics, which depended in part on personalities, on Chinese and Soviet pressures and the level of their aid required for survival, on the status of army success in the Indochina war, and the effectiveness of the party control mechanism. Other factors were also important, particularly public (rural and urban) demands for more material benefits, intellectual and youth pressures for expanded freedoms, and highlander pressures for increased autonomy vis-a-vis the Vietnamese.

It appeared likely that the party, with continued military support, could handle these pressures as it had previously. What was less certain was the eventual outcome of cabal politics; the leaders were not young men and

<sup>5</sup> Arthur J. Dommen, "The Future of North Vietnam," *Current History*, April, 1970, pp. 229-232, 245.

the balance established with Le Duan at first was precarious. During 1970, it appeared that he was indeed prepared to make a move to consolidate his position. In the February 14, 1970, issue of *Nhan Dan* he noted that a proletariat leadership was essential (although the Lao Dong party had given itself a special dispensation on this score years before). He condemned party members who were taking advantage of their positions, dishonesty on the part of certain responsible officials, and lack of initiative in the leadership. In March, 1970, the Politburo passed a resolution condemning members of cooperatives who were engaging in private business. Press and radio attacks against lazy, dishonest officials began, and trials were held against those who committed violations (theft) against socialist property. A Party Secretariat was established by the Politburo. And a year-long drive to replace expelled party members with new recruits, the "Ho Chi Minh" class members, began in May.<sup>6</sup> All these developments overshadowed well-publicized international politics, except for Indochina.

## THE TWO VIETNAMS

The political future of the two Vietnams is contingent on too many possible developments to warrant much speculation. To the north lies a totalitarian state with an experienced population control mechanism, although it has a less totally controlled social system than its giant Chinese neighbor. To the south lies a state that must still be termed a dictatorship, despite its quasi-military and quasi-civilian regime and its increasingly decentralized political system. Future politics in each nation depends to a great extent upon developments in the war in Indochina. The D.R.V.N. will not cease its efforts to control the political system of the G.V.N. Hanoi is also unlikely to abandon its Indochina policy; at the very least, Vietnamese suzerainty over Laos and Cambodia has always been a Lao Dong objective. Developments at the Paris

<sup>6</sup> An extremely critical review of these developments in the D.R.V.N. is given by P. J. Honey in two issues of the *China News Analysis*, No. 804 (June 12, 1970) and No. 815 (September 18, 1970).

peace talks have always been dependent on Hanoi's interpretation of how an American proposal or how a Washington-Saigon acceptance of a Hanoi proposal relates to politico-military conditions at a given moment in Indochina.

Despite the tremendous hardships of the past several years, North Vietnam remains the only nation in Indochina that has escaped the devastation of land warfare. However, the economy of the D.R.V.N. continues to be less prosperous than that of the G.V.N. It is possible that the economic equation will influence political changes in Hanoi. And the decisions of political leaders in Hanoi will affect political processes in Saigon. For the southern Vietnamese state, the major political questions are (1) the external political tactics of Hanoi; (2) the format of the decline of American economic support, and (3) the viability of the national government. Clearly, the most important question is the third. South Vietnam's persistent inability to formulate a political structure that obtains at least the acquiescence of her divergent groups remains her chief weakness. And the possibility that South Vietnam can overcome this weakness—or, contrarily, her failure to overcome it—will influence the cabal politics in Hanoi even more than domestic questions within the government of North Vietnam.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from page 363)

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS OF REGIONS. By LOUIS J. CANTON AND STEVEN L. SPIEGEL. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970. 389 pages, appendices and index, \$7.95.)

Forsaking the cold war, bipolar approach, the authors look at world problems from various regional perspectives. They consider the core countries of the regions, the nations on the periphery of these cores, and the intrusive powers, thereby giving the problems and concerns of the respective countries a far more realistic and valid presentation.

O.E.S.

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## UNITED STATES POLICIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

*(Continued from page 325)*

and development of Asian regionalism, for cooperation among Asian states would help provide an excellent base on which to pin the hopes of President Richard Nixon's Guam Doctrine. Indeed, the United States national interest has always required that there be more than one center of power in East Asia, an interest which in the past led to conflict with Japan, and which suggests why the United States today opposes what appear to be China's ambitions for Asian hegemony.

The less developed nations of Southeast Asia, although they are immense in population and resources, can similarly best hope to resist China's hegemonic ambitions if they work together. This parallelism between United States interests in the Pacific region and the interests of the nations of Southeast Asia is perhaps the most important point to bear in mind when we consider the Asian policies of the United States for the 1970's. To the extent that the past two decades of United States policy have enabled the nations of Southeast Asia to progress to the point where they now seriously consider cooperation among themselves, those United States policies have met with considerable success.

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## THAILAND AND THE CAMBODIAN CONFLICT

*(Continued from page 355)*

again little would probably come of this proposal.

Thailand's efforts to rally indigenous Asian-Pacific support for Cambodia or generate a "natural coalition" of the four Mekong countries did not register an impressive record or make a convincing case for regional solidarity. Nor did other international channels respond rapidly or effectively. Indeed, the Cambodian imbroglio may have temporarily impaired Thailand's whole concept of regional solidarity and collective political de-

fense which Thanat Khoman has worked so hard to promote. But it is probably too soon to tell.

### THAI-CAMBODIAN RELATIONS

The Cambodian situation has revolutionized Thai-Cambodian relations. The Thais are embroiled in Cambodian developments as they have not been for a century. If handled wisely and moderately, this situation could allay the fears of unfortunate repercussions and benefit both countries. After nearly 10 years of political separation except for their participation in the Mekong Committee, Thailand and Cambodia reestablished diplomatic relations on May 13, 1970, on the basis of respect for their common borders, non-interference in domestic affairs, effective co-operation for mutual benefit, and declarations of confidence, friendship and fraternity.

Cambodian and Thai officials have followed up these words with visits, consultation and considerable assistance from Thailand. In late May a top-level Thai military delegation went to Phnompenh to discuss aid and other matters. Cambodian Prime Minister Lon Nol visited Bangkok July 22-23, for meetings with Premier Thanom "to consider the security situation in Cambodia and its impact on regional peace and stability."

The question of Thai assistance has remained a difficult problem for Bangkok, Phnompenh and Washington. The Thai government immediately welcomed the South Vietnamese-United States military operations in eastern Cambodia during April-June, 1970, although Thanat Khoman suggested that it would have been preferable if only South Vietnam and Thai troops had been used. In early May, Cambodia apparently appealed for troops from Asian and Pacific countries, and hoped that the Jakarta Conference would endorse and facilitate assistance for Cambodia. The Thais at first seemed about to send some forces into Cambodia under certain circumstances but these forces did not materialize. Instead, Thailand has set about to provide other kinds of direct and indirect assistance.

According to press reports and official

statements, this aid has included border patrols along the frontier, troop training, air support and military supplies. Procedures have apparently been worked out for joint patrolling and other security measures along the border. The Thais have been training Thais of Cambodian extraction who volunteer for service in Cambodia. And the Thai military establishment has also agreed to train Cambodians from Cambodia for the Cambodian armed forces. Thailand has supplied Cambodia with some aircraft and has been regularly flying what are described as "air reconnaissance missions." Thailand has also supplied a wide assortment of equipment, from mosquito nets to patrol boats.

Discussions have taken place about sending Thai military instructors and advisers to Cambodia. Some advisers with experience in South Vietnam might have come from the 12,000 Thai troops and their replacements who have been deployed near Saigon since 1968. It is curious that the governments concerned did not move this Thai division back to Thailand at the outbreak of the Cambodian crisis, but it was not until late in 1970 that the return began. This bare sketch of Thai aid to Cambodia may make it seem a modest effort; Thailand might have offered more support had there been a joint United States-Thai program.

### THAI-AMERICAN RELATIONS

However, the Cambodian conflict added severe stresses to an already strained relationship between Thailand and the United States. Just as Thai and American authorities were trying to defray the costs and make equipment available for Thai forces to be sent to Cambodia, a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee issued a report revealing secret executive agreements between the two governments by which the United States had paid some \$200 million over four years for the expenses of Thai troops in South Vietnam.

The report did not make it sufficiently clear that it had been American officials, not Thai, who had instigated and insisted on Thai troops for South Vietnam, and Ameri-

can payments for their extra expense, evidently in secret. In any event, this distorted "mercenary issue" provoked such congressional resistance and legislative restrictions against funding third-country forces in Cambodia that Washington could not compensate Thailand's hard-pressed budget for the extra costs of meeting a new security threat to the east.

The folly of embroiling Thailand secretly and expediently in the war in Vietnam instead of facilitating Thailand's crucial contribution, vital leadership and special role in the more significant long-range task of structuring and powering Southeast Asia regionalism has been expensive. As I pointed out in *Current History* in February, 1969, Thailand is the political centerpiece and balance wheel for generating real regional cooperation in East Asia. Our involvement of Thailand in the military operations of the Indochina War may have compromised that essential role and complicated Thailand's efforts to promote regional political solutions to the Cambodian problem. Effective regional cooperation would have helped to guarantee an orderly American disengagement. In any case, misunderstanding has hurt Thai-American relations.

Clearly, as the United States disengages from Indochina, the relationship between Thailand and the United States is being severely tested. For Thailand, the test comes at an inauspicious time, when internal insurgency and insecurity have increased, indirectly spurred by Cambodian developments, and when Thailand is facing decreasing United States aid, a declining rice market, financial deficits, and perhaps an expanding "vacuum" of power in Southeast Asia.

Shifting relationships might well stimulate the Thai to resolve their dilemmas more independently. That would indeed reflect their national character and historical heritage, and would also benefit Southeast Asia. In the long run, if the Communists do not conquer the Khmer Republic, the impact of the Cambodian crisis might not be wholly disadvantageous for Thailand's important position in Asia.

# THE MONTH IN REVIEW

*A CURRENT HISTORY chronology covering the most important events of October, 1970, to provide a day-by-day summary of world affairs.*

## INTERNATIONAL

### Berlin Crisis

- Oct. 6—The East German government closes the Marienborn checkpoint of the autobahn for 15 minutes, delaying traffic to and from West Berlin.
- Oct. 9—Representatives of the Big Four powers (the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France) meet in Berlin to discuss ways to improve the situation of the city.

### Middle East Crisis

(See also *Intl., United Nations*)

#### 1. Arab-Israeli Conflict

- Oct. 6—U.A.R. Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad denies that the U.A.R. moved anti-aircraft missiles into the truce zone after the beginning of the 90-day cease-fire in the Middle East; he claims that although the U.A.R. is willing to extend the cease-fire for another 90 days, it will not remove a single missile.
- Oct. 8—A statement issued by the Soviet Foreign Ministry denies that the Soviet Union took part in any violations of the Middle East cease-fire.
- Oct. 9—U.S. Secretary of State William P. Rogers says that the U.S. has conclusive evidence of Soviet complicity in Egyptian violations of the Middle East cease-fire.
- Oct. 10—Riad announces that the U.A.R. will not extend the cease-fire unless Israel agrees to attend the peace talks as arranged by the United Nations special representative for the Middle East, Gunnar V. Jarring.
- Oct. 12—In a speech in Washington, D.C., Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban reiterates the Israeli position that there can be no progress in the Jarring peace talks

until the U.S.S.R. and the U.A.R. remove the disputed missiles from the Suez Canal truce zone.

- Oct. 20—Israeli Premier Golda Meir, meeting in New York with Rogers, again demands that the U.A.R. rectify its violations of the Middle East truce.
- Oct. 25—The Cairo newspaper, *Al Ahram*, prints a dispatch that says that the U.A.R. has "no objection to a cease-fire extension for two months." The dispatch indicates that the U.A.R. considers imperative the reactivation of Jarring's peace mission.

- Oct. 29—U.S. delegate Charles W. Yost submits a resolution to the U.N. recommending a three-month extension of the Middle East cease-fire.
- Oct. 30—Yakov Malik, Soviet representative at the U.N., demands the immediate resumption of the Middle East peace talks and turns down U.S. and Israeli demands that the U.A.R. withdraw missiles allegedly placed in the Canal Zone standstill area after the truce.
- Oct. 31—It is reported from Beirut that at an unpublicized meeting of commando leaders, agreement has been reached to reorganize commando activities in Lebanon.

#### 2. Jordanian Conflict

- Oct. 1—Adnan Abu Odeh, Information Minister of the new Jordanian government, says that Jordan will deal with Al Fatah as the sole legitimate Palestinian guerrilla organization. Abu Odeh says that Jordan still wants a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict; however, Al Fatah will be allowed to bring in arms for the camps along the Israeli frontier.

- Oct. 5—The Jordanian government announces that about 1,500 commandos

pulled out of Amman yesterday and that thousands of Jordanian Army troops also left the capital. Some Arab diplomats say that part-time commandos have been allowed to remain in Amman without surrendering their weapons. A truce between Palestinian guerrillas and regular army troops was arranged last month.

Oct. 9—A spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine reports the establishment of a joint military committee to coordinate the moves of commando groups; the new group will be called the Military Leadership Committee.

Oct. 13—An accord drawn up by an Arab mission to enforce the agreement ending the Jordanian civil war is signed by Jordan's King Hussein and Yasir Arafat, the Palestinian commando leader; the accord restores a large measure of freedom to the commando movement, but it also recognizes the sovereignty and unity of Jordan.

Oct. 17—Fighting between the Jordanian army and Palestinian guerrillas erupts in Amman.

Oct. 28—King Hussein appoints his third new Cabinet in six weeks. Wasfi el-Tal becomes Premier.

## Organization of African Unity

Oct. 16—A delegation from the Organization of African Unity meets with British Prime Minister Edward Heath to protest the proposed resumption of arms sales to South Africa.

## United Nations

(See also *Intl. Middle East Crisis*)

Oct. 13—The General Assembly votes to make Fiji the 127th member state of the U.N.

Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu, Yugoslav Premier Mitja Ribicic and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko are among the notables who arrive to take part in the U.N.'s 25th anniversary celebration scheduled to begin tomorrow.

Oct. 16—in a speech to the General Assembly, U.A.R. Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad accuses the U.S. of having misled the

late Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser into accepting a Middle East cease-fire. Riad charges that the U.S. broke its promise to refrain from sending more planes to Israel.

Oct. 21—In speeches to the General Assembly, Israeli Premier Golda Meir and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko reiterate their opposing positions on the Middle East.

Oct. 23—Addressing the General Assembly, U.S. President Richard Nixon appeals to the U.S.S.R. to work with the U.S. for world peace.

Oct. 24—The 25th anniversary celebration concludes with a General Assembly declaration condemning colonialism and racism in South Africa; a second declaration outlining a 10-year program for the development of the poorer nations is adopted by acclamation.

Oct. 26—Opening the 1st debate in the General Assembly on the Middle East since 1967, U.A.R. Foreign Minister Riad calls on the U.N. to effect the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territory and to restore peace in the Middle East.

Five countries are elected to 2-year terms in the Security Council: Argentina, Belgium, Italy, Japan and Somalia.

Oct. 28—Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban tells the U.N. that Israeli-U.A.R. peace talks cannot be resumed until newly installed U.A.R. missiles in the Suez standstill zone are removed.

## War in Indochina

Oct. 2—The Cambodian command indicates that in Cambodia only 2 major land routes, Route 5 and Route 7, are fully open to travel; the others have been cut or are under attack by Vietcong and North Vietnamese forces.

Oct. 5—U.S. and South Vietnamese forces repel a North Vietnamese attack on an outpost south of Danang in South Vietnam.

Cambodian military spokesmen report that Cambodian forces repelled an attack by Communist forces 57 miles southwest of Phnompenh.

Oct. 7—In a nationally televised speech, U.S. President Richard Nixon proposes to the North Vietnamese and Vietcong a standstill cease-fire throughout Indochina and expanded peace talks.

Oct. 8—North Vietnamese and Vietcong delegates to the Paris peace talks denounce President Nixon's new peace proposals.

Oct. 14—South Vietnamese headquarters announce 3 clashes with North Vietnamese troops along the Cambodian border; the Communists are reinfiltrating their former sanctuary areas.

Oct. 16—A statement by the North Vietnamese Foreign Minister formally rejects President Nixon's standstill cease-fire peace proposals.

Oct. 21—U.S. B-52's continue to bomb the Ho Chi Minh trail in southern Laos for the 13th day.

Oct. 31—Speaking to a joint session of South Vietnam's National Assembly, President Nguyen Van Thieu says that "peace in victory" will come on the battlefield, not in the Paris peace talks; he will not accept a coalition government with the Communists.

### **Warsaw Pact**

Oct. 17—More than 100,000 troops from the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and East Germany end 5 days of war games in East Germany; Rumania has a 300-man staff contingent at the games.

### **ARGENTINA**

Oct. 15—In the wake of the resignation of Interior Minister Brigadier General Eduardo McLoughlin on October 13, and of Economics Minister Carlos Moyano Llerena on October 14, the president of the Argentine central bank, Egidio Ianello, closes all foreign exchange markets temporarily.

Oct. 16—President Roberto Marcelo Levingston appoints Aldo M. Ferrer as the new Economics Minister.

### **AUSTRIA**

Oct. 4—Unofficial results of elections for 165

seats in Parliament disclose that the ruling Socialist party has won 82 seats, the People's party, 78 seats, and the Freedom party, 5 seats.

### **BOLIVIA**

Oct. 4—The Chief of Staff of the Bolivian Army, General Rogelio Miranda, leads part of the army in a revolt against President Alfredo Ovando Candia; there are no reports of shooting.

Oct. 5—Army officers call for the resignations of President Ovando and General Miranda.

Oct. 6—President Ovando resigns after 6 planes bomb the presidential palace under orders from General Juan José Torres, a leftist.

Oct. 7—Torres takes the oath of office as President; leftist students and workers occupy the buildings of 3 leading newspapers, *El Diario*, *Los Tiempos* and *Hoy*.

Oct. 9—President Torres names his new Cabinet; half the new Cabinet members are military officers.

Oct. 13—Bolivian schools and shops reopen.

### **BRAZIL**

Oct. 1—After a meeting of President Emilio G. Medici and his Cabinet, the details of a 4-year, \$40-billion social and economic development program are made public; the new program stresses education.

### **CAMBODIA**

(See also *Intl. War in Indochina*)

Oct. 9—In public ceremonies, Cambodia is declared a republic.

### **CANADA**

Oct. 5—The Front for the Liberation of Quebec kidnaps James Richard Cross, the Senior British Trade Commissioner in the Province of Quebec and the head of the British government office in Montreal. The Front is demanding the release of "political prisoners" and \$500,000 in gold.

Oct. 10—Pierre Laporte, Quebec's Minister of Labor and Immigration, is kidnapped.

Oct. 13—Canada and Communist China es-

tablish diplomatic relations; Canada breaks relations with the Chinese Nationalist government. Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Mitchell Sharp says that Canada has "noted" the Communist claim to the island of Taiwan but has not accepted it.

Oct. 15—The government of Quebec offers to release 5 of the 23 political prisoners whose freedom is demanded by the Front for the Liberation of Quebec.

Oct. 16—Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau announces to the House of Commons that the War Measures Act is being invoked. This is the first time these emergency wartime measures have been used in peacetime. The measures, which will be in force for 6 months, empower the police to make searches and arrests without warrants. Some 250 are arrested.

Oct. 18—The body of Laporte is found by police.

Oct. 19—The House of Commons votes 190 to 16 to support Prime Minister Trudeau's action in invoking the War Measures Act.

### CHILE

Oct. 9—The Christian Democratic party and the leftist coalition supporting Marxist Salvador Allende, front-running candidate for the presidency, reach an agreement on constitutional amendments which are presented to Congress. The Christian Democrats have agreed to support Allende when Congress votes on October 24 to select a President if Allende supports the amendments.

Oct. 22—President Eduardo Frei Montalva decrees a state of emergency after General René Schneider Chereau, the commander-in-chief of the Chilean army, is critically wounded by an unidentified gunman.

Oct. 24—Salvador Allende is elected President by a joint session of Congress.

Oct. 25—General Schneider dies.

Oct. 30—President-elect Allende gives 3 key economic posts in his Cabinet to Communists, reserving the Interior Ministry, the Foreign Ministry and the Housing Ministry for members of his Socialist party.

### CHINA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF (Communist)

(See also *Canada, North Vietnam*)

Oct. 2—In official reports of yesterday's observances in Peking of the 21st anniversary of Communist rule in China, *Hsinhua*, the Chinese Communist press agency, refers to Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Communist party, as Supreme Commander of the Whole Nation and the Whole Army; Lin Piao, the party's Deputy Chairman, is called Deputy Supreme Commander.

Oct. 10—Vasily S. Tolstikov, the new Soviet ambassador to Communist China, arrives in Peking; his predecessor was recalled in April, 1967.

Oct. 25—Maurice Couve de Murville, former French Premier, concludes a 3-week visit, during which he met with Premier Chou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung.

### CHINA, REPUBLIC OF (Nationalist)

(See *Canada*)

### ECUADOR

Oct. 27—The government of Ecuador declares martial law in the wake of the kidnapping of General César Rohn Sandoval, the chief of the Air Force.

### EIRE

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 19—Bank employees accept new wage offers ending a strike that began on April 30, 1970.

### FIJI

(See also *Intl., U.N.*)

Oct. 10—British Prince Charles is present at ceremonies marking the independence of the Fiji Islands; Fiji becomes a member of the Commonwealth of Nations.

### FRANCE

(See also *U.S.S.R.*)

Oct. 8—In a 374-to-95 vote, the National Assembly approves a 5-year military program of \$16.7 billion for research and con-

struction; about \$5 billion of the funds will be spent on strategic and tactical nuclear forces.

### **GERMANY, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (East)**

Oct. 29—The Bonn government agrees to resume talks aimed at relaxing tensions between the two Germanies.

### **GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF (West)**

Oct. 8—Three members of the Free Democratic party (the partner in the Social Democratic-led coalition government of Chancellor Willy Brandt) fail to support the Chancellor in a critical vote in the *Bundestag*.

Oct. 9—The Christian Democratic party accepts the 3 defectors from the Free Democratic party.

Oct. 11—Yugoslav President Tito confers with Chancellor Willy Brandt in West Germany.

Oct. 30—Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko confers with West German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel in Frankfurt; this is the first time a Soviet foreign minister has ever visited West Germany.

### **GHANA**

Oct. 9—The Ghanaian radio reports that President Edward Akufo-Addo has been flown to London for medical attention; Nii Ammah Ollenu, Speaker of the National Assembly, is sworn in as acting President.

### **GREECE**

Oct. 2—U.S. Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer (chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff) and Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr. (U.S. Chief of Naval Operations) arrive in Athens for talks with Greek leaders.

Oct. 5—U.S. leaders leave Athens following 3 days of talks with Premier George Papadopoulos and other Greek leaders.

Oct. 17—The government announces that elections will be held on November 29,

1970, for a 56-man "Consultive Committee on Legislation." The committee will debate and comment on draft bills, but its decisions will not be binding on the Cabinet.

### **INDIA**

Oct. 2—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi suspends the government of the state of Uttar Pradesh and imposes President's Rule, rule by the national government.

Oct. 17—Prime Minister Gandhi allows an opposition coalition to form a new government in Uttar Pradesh.

### **IRAQ**

Oct. 15—The Revolutionary Command Council issues a communiqué announcing that Air Marshal Hardan Takriti, a Vice President, a member of the Command Council and Supreme Commander of the Air Force, has been relieved of all his military and civilian positions.

### **ISRAEL**

(See *Intl, Middle East Crisis; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

### **ITALY**

Oct. 2—The government and organized labor reach agreement on the creation of a national health service and measures to promote the building of low-rent housing.

Oct. 9—The Senate votes to legalize divorce; the bill now goes back to the Chamber of Deputies.

### **IVORY COAST**

Oct. 8—The government orders Odumegwu Ojukwu, the former Biafran leader, to leave the country.

### **JAPAN**

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 20—The Cabinet approves a document conditionally reaffirming Japan's intention not to have nuclear weapons and stressing the fact that her armed forces are maintained only for defense.

Oct. 29—Premier Eisaku Sato is reelected to

a fourth term as president of the Liberal-Democratic party which controls both houses of the Diet (parliament); this assures him of the premiership for a two-year term.

Oct. 30—Premier Sato plans to make no changes in Cabinet or party posts, he announces today.

### JORDAN

(See *Intl, Middle East Crisis*)

### KOREA, PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (North)

Oct. 12—The United Nations command announces that North Korean guards and civilians today attacked a group of the command's security guards with shovels, clubs and stones in Panmunjom, inside the demilitarized zone.

### KOREA, REPUBLIC OF (South)

Oct. 11—The Defense Ministry announces that last night South Korean naval vessels sank a North Korean spy boat in the Sea of Japan 20 miles south of the demilitarized zone.

### LAOS

(See also *Intl, War in Indochina*)

Oct. 29—A formula proposed by the Pathet Lao to ensure a meeting with the government is accepted by the government.

### LEBANON

Oct. 3—President Suleiman Franjeh accepts the resignation of Premier Rashid Karami and his Cabinet.

Oct. 7—Saeb Salaam, designated by the President as the new Premier 2 days ago, forms a 12-man Cabinet.

### NETHERLANDS, THE

Oct. 20—Yugoslav President Tito arrives for a 3-day state visit.

### NIGER

Oct. 1—Hamani Diori, who has been President since Niger gained independence in 1960, is reelected for another 5-year term.

### PHILIPPINES

Oct. 16—Pedro Taruc, commander of the Communist-led Hukbalahap guerrillas, is killed by 2 civilian informers who were leading an army unit to his house.

### SOUTH AFRICA

(See *Intl, Organization of African Unity*)

### SPAIN

(See *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

### SYRIA

Oct. 19—Arab sources disclose that the ruling Baath party has called an emergency meeting to name a successor to Nureddin al-Attassi, who is reported to have resigned as President and Premier on October 16. The Iraq News Agency reports that Attassi is under house arrest.

### THAILAND

Oct. 5—Negotiations are resumed between North Vietnam and Thailand over the repatriation of some 40,000 North Vietnamese refugees living in Thailand.

### TURKEY

(See also *U.S.S.R.; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 17—Turkish courts order the release of 2 Soviet Lithuanians who, on October 15, hijacked a Soviet plane during a domestic flight, killed the stewardess, and landed in Turkey. The Soviet Union has insisted on the extradition of the hijackers.

Oct. 18—A Ministry of Justice official announces that the Soviet hijackers will not be released until their case has been reviewed.

Oct. 20—A Foreign Ministry spokesman announces that Turkey and the Soviet Union will sign an accord tomorrow that will permit Soviet trucks to cross Turkey en route to Syria and Iraq.

### U.S.S.R.

(See also *Intl, Middle East Crisis; Turkey; U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 6—French President Georges Pompidou is welcomed by Leonid I. Brezhnev, Soviet

Communist party leader, Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin, and President Nikolai V. Podgorny when he arrives for an 8-day visit.

Oct. 9—Soviet officials say that Premier Kosygin will not attend the 25th anniversary session of the United Nations this month.

Oct. 11—In Moscow, Cuban Defense Minister Raul Castro confers with the Soviet Defense Minister, Marshal Andrei A. Grechko, and Major General Cham Sham, Deputy Defense Minister of North Vietnam.

Oct. 13—Prior to the departure of French President Pompidou, President Podgorny and Pompidou sign an agreement calling for a deepening and strengthening of political contacts and consultation during periods of international tension.

Oct. 16—The passengers of the Soviet plane hijacked and forced to land in Turkey yesterday return to the U.S.S.R.; *Tass*, the Soviet press agency, declares that the Russians are demanding the extradition of the hijackers.

Oct. 21—*Tass* reports that Zond 8, an unmanned spacecraft, was launched yesterday; flight plans call for the spacecraft to circle the moon.

Oct. 22—*Tass* announces that the U.S. Air Force plane carrying 2 U.S. generals, reported missing in Turkey yesterday, has landed in the U.S.S.R.

Oct. 23—*Tass* reports that the Soviet Union has agreed to supply North Vietnam with additional military and economic aid.

Oct. 26—*Tass* reports the Soviet protest to the U.S. and Turkey of violations of Soviet airspace by a U.S. Air Force plane October 21. The Russians indicate that they consider the incursion a hostile act.

U.S. consular officers meet with the Turkish officer and the 3 Americans who are being detained by the U.S.S.R. The pilot of the plane is reported to have blamed the incursion into Soviet territory on weather conditions and his own errors.

Oct. 27—Two Soviet students hijack a small Soviet plane to Turkey.

Following the landing of Zond 8 in the

Indian Ocean, *Tass* reports the successful completion of the space experiment.

## UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

(See also *Intl, Middle East Crisis*)

Oct. 7—The National Assembly unanimously nominates acting President Anwar Sadat as President; the nomination of Sadat, who was Vice President until the death of Gamal Abdel Nasser, will be submitted to a national referendum on October 15.

Oct. 17—Sadat is sworn in as President; he received 90.04 per cent of the vote in the October 15 election.

Oct. 21—Mahmoud Fawzi takes the oath of office as the new Premier of the U.A.R.; 32 Cabinet members are also sworn in.

## UNITED KINGDOM

(See *Intl, O.A.U., U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 27—In a special budget speech, Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer, announces government plans for reductions in taxes, subsidies and public spending. He also reveals that Britain is abandoning her system of support for agriculture in favor of the Common Market system of levies on imports.

## UNITED STATES

### Civil Rights and Race Relations

Oct. 1—Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Elliot L. Richardson announces that President Richard Nixon has ordered a \$30-million increase in federal aid to predominantly black colleges.

Oct. 25—City, state and county police battle squads of armed Negroes who attacked a police station in Cairo, Illinois, 3 times yesterday and today.

### Economy

Oct. 2—The Labor Department announces that the unemployment rate for September rose to 5.5 per cent.

Oct. 15—The Commerce Department reports that the gross national product for the third quarter of 1970 rose \$14 billion over the second quarter; this is a 6 per cent increase at an annual rate.

Oct. 28—It is reported that the federal government's index of leading indicators of general business activity shows no upsurge for September and October, 1970, although manufacturing and labor costs have moved up strongly.

## Foreign Policy

(See also *Intl., Middle East, War in Indochina; U.S.S.R.*)

Oct. 1—During the 2d day of his visit to Yugoslavia, President Nixon discusses world problems with Yugoslav President Tito.

Oct. 2—President Nixon confers with Spanish leaders, including Generalissimo Francisco Franco, in Madrid.

Oct. 3—President Nixon pays a 5-hour visit to Britain where he visits Prime Minister Edward Heath and Queen Elizabeth II; the President is en route to Ireland.

Oct. 4—In Ireland, the President confers with David K. E. Bruce and Philip C. Habib, his 2 negotiators at the Paris peace talks on Vietnam.

Oct. 5—Following visits with Irish President Eamon de Valera and Prime Minister John Lynch, President Nixon returns to Washington, D.C.

Oct. 10—State Department spokesmen announce that the U.S. has decided to lift the embargo on the sale of arms to Pakistan.

Oct. 12—Following a presidential briefing of news executives in Hartford, Connecticut, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler says that the President has decided to withdraw 40,000 troops from Vietnam between now and December 25, 1970. The 40,000 are part of the 150,000 troops scheduled to be withdrawn by the spring of 1971.

Oct. 13—Daniel Z. Henkin, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs of the Defense Department, says that new evidence makes it appear less likely that the Soviet Union is building a submarine base in Cuba.

(See *U.S., Foreign Policy*, September 25ff., in *Current History*, November, 1970, pp. 318 ff.)

Oct. 16—U.S. Secretary of State Rogers confers with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko in New York.

Oct. 22—President Nixon and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko confer in Washington.

Oct. 23—The U.S. asks the U.S.S.R. to expedite the release of 3 U.S. officers and a Turkish colonel whose plane violated Soviet air space during a flight over eastern Turkey and landed in the U.S.S.R. on October 21.

Defense Department sources reveal that the U.S. has agreed to provide Israel with about 180 tanks as part of \$500 million in assistance.

Oct. 24—Visiting Japanese Premier Eisaku Sato and President Nixon formally agree to the resumption of negotiations on the Japanese industry's voluntary restrictions on exports to the U.S.

At a formal dinner, President Nixon entertains foreign heads of state and government visiting the U.S. for the U.N. anniversary celebration.

Oct. 25—At the White House, President Nixon discusses a variety of world problems in meetings with heads of state and government in the U.S. to attend the U.N. anniversary celebration.

Oct. 26—President Nixon confers with Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu in Washington.

Oct. 29—U.S. and Soviet delegations sign an agreement agreeing to develop mutually compatible docking and rendezvous systems for spacecraft.

## Government

(See also *U.S., Pollution, Student Unrest*)

Oct. 1—The Senate completes action on a \$19.9-billion military procurement bill and sends it to the White House. The measure limits spending on new weapons, authorizes \$1.3 billion to expand the Safeguard missile system, and authorizes open-end arms sales to Israel.

Oct. 2—A federal district court in the District of Columbia upholds the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Amendment of 1970 which lowered the voting age to 18, and

abolished literacy tests and residency requirements of more than 30 days for registering to vote in presidential elections.  
Oct. 7—The President nominates Elbert Franklin Osborn as head of the Bureau of Mines.

Oct. 12—President Nixon vetoes a bill whose aim was to limit radio and television spending by presidential, congressional and gubernatorial candidates in political campaigns.

Oct. 13—Angela Davis is arrested in New York by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The young black philosophy professor has been charged in California with having purchased the guns used in a kidnap-escape from a California courtroom in August in which a judge and 3 other people were killed.

Oct. 14—Both houses of Congress pass legislation creating the National Railroad Passenger Corporation. The corporation, which will be partly financed by the government, will operate intercity passenger trains in areas of high-density travel.

A month-long congressional recess begins.

Oct. 15—The President signs the Urban Mass Transit Assistance Act of 1970, authorizing the expenditure of \$10 billion over a 12-year period to help cities revive mass transit systems.

The President signs the Organized Crime Control Act of 1970. Among other provisions, the act makes bombing a federal crime and allows F.B.I. agents to investigate bombings on college campuses.

Oct. 16—President Nixon signs a proclamation providing for increased heating oil imports for the east coast this winter.

Oct. 21—The President signs a bill calling for the construction of 300 merchant ships over the next 10 years.

Oct. 24—While campaigning for Republican candidates in Maryland, President Nixon repudiates the report of the National Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. (*See U.S., Government, in Current History*, November, 1970, p. 319.)

Oct. 26—The President signs a \$1.7-billion military construction bill for the current

fiscal year and the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970.

President Nixon signs the Resource Recovery Act of 1970 which authorizes the appropriation of \$463 million over the next 3 years to aid cities and states in the construction of systems for solid waste disposal and recovery.

Oct. 27—The President signs the Drug Abuse Control Act, providing 300 additional narcotics agents and giving federal officers more authority to act against drug pushers.

Oct. 30—in a televised speech paid for by the Republican National Committee, President Nixon calls for an end to "the wave of violence and terrorism by the radical antidemocratic elements in our society."

## Military

Oct. 8—Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird says that by 1973 he hopes to achieve a "zero draft."

Oct. 26—The director of the Selective Service System, Curtis W. Tarr, orders local draft boards to withdraw immediately the deferments of men who request that their deferments be canceled.

## Politics

Oct. 16—The Rules Committee of the Democratic party adopts a reform recommendation for the next presidential nominating convention. The recommendation calls for the big states to have a proportionately larger voice in committees.

Oct. 17—President Nixon campaigns on behalf of Republican candidates in Vermont, New Jersey, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Oct. 19—The President attacks "terrorism and crime" as he campaigns for Republicans in Ohio, Missouri and North Dakota.

Oct. 21—Ronald L. Ziegler, White House press secretary, reiterates that the President will not endorse the candidacy of Republican Senator Charles E. Goodell of New York.

Oct. 26—Campaigning in North and South Carolina, Vice President Spiro Agnew pledges that the Nixon administration will put a Southerner on the Supreme Court,

support neighborhood schools and protect the region's textile industry.

Speaking at a dinner in New York, John V. Lindsay, Republican Mayor of New York City, attacks President Nixon's conduct of the 1970 campaign and accuses him of using fear tactics to "eliminate" his opponents from public life.

Oct. 27—Rogers C. B. Morton, Republican National Chairman, charges that Lindsay is renouncing his party and his own beliefs for political gain.

### **Pollution and Environment**

Oct. 9—The Internal Revenue Service announces a formal challenge to the tax-exempt status of organizations which file lawsuits against alleged polluters.

Oct. 22—A 3-day conference convened by the Federal Water Quality Administration at the request of the Florida state government concludes by establishing deadlines for the cleanup of water pollution in and near Dade County.

Oct. 26—The President orders the use of low-lead or unleaded gasoline in federal vehicles wherever such use is practical.

### **Student Unrest**

Oct. 1—The President's Commission on Campus Unrest issues a report on the shooting at Jackson State College in Mississippi on May 14, 1970; the report accuses Mississippi policemen of unjustified over-reaction when they fired at black students.

Oct. 4—The report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest on the May 4, 1970, shootings at Kent State University in Ohio is released. The report accuses some students of violent and criminal actions and others of recklessness and irresponsibility and scores the indiscriminate firing of rifles by Ohio National Guardsmen.

Oct. 13—An assistant to the director of the Student Financial Aid Division of H.E.W. reports that aid for 40 students has been terminated under federal provisions because of their participation in campus disorders; aid to an additional 400 students

has been terminated by their individual school administrations.

Oct. 16—A special Ohio state grand jury indicted 25 persons in connection with the disturbances and shooting on the campus of Kent State University last May. None of the Ohio National Guardsmen are indicted. The grand jury finds that the "major responsibility" for these events rests with university administration officials.

Oct. 30—A 35-page Justice Department summary of the F.B.I. inquiry into the Kent State University shootings of May 4, 1970, disagrees sharply with the Ohio grand jury findings exonerating the National Guardsmen involved on the grounds that they believed their lives were in danger.

### **Supreme Court**

Oct. 5—The 1970 term of the Supreme Court is convened.

### **URUGUAY**

Oct. 15—The Cabinet of President Jorge Pacheco Areco offers to resign after the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies nullified more than 70 of the nearly 100 executive vetoes of projects in the national budget yesterday.

### **VIETNAM, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF (North)**

(See also *Intl. War in Indochina; U.S.S.R.*)

Oct. 8—The North Vietnamese press and radio praise an aid agreement between Communist China and North Vietnam, announced yesterday in Peking.

### **VIETNAM, REPUBLIC OF (South)**

(See *Intl. War in Indochina*)

### **YUGOSLAVIA**

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 11—President Tito returns from a 5-day trip that included talks in Brussels, Luxembourg and Bonn.

Oct. 24—President Tito returns from a visit to France where he conferred with French President Pompidou.

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